

THE
BOOK OF PSALMS



*Bibl. Lit-
Comment. (O.J.)
Psalms*



THE
BOOK OF PSALMS

OR
THE PRAISES OF ISRAEL

A NEW TRANSLATION, WITH COMMENTARY

BY THE
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TO
PROF. FRANZ DELITZSCH
IN ADMIRATION OF
NOBLE SERVICES TO SCHOLARSHIP AND THE CHURCH
AND IN GRATITUDE FOR
THE PRIVILEGE OF HIS FRIENDSHIP



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INTRODUCTION.

THE NATURE OF THIS NEW VERSION OF THE PSALMS, AND ITS JUSTIFICATION IN CERTAIN PERMANENT WANTS OF THE EDUCATED READER—HOW THOSE WANTS WERE SATISFIED IN THE REFORMATION PERIOD AND AFTERWARDS—EMENDATION OF THE TEXT, WHY AND HOW RESORTED TO—THE SPIRIT OF THE PRESENT COMMENTARY—THE ALTERNATIVE TITLE EXPLAINED—THE DIVISIONS OF THE PSALTER—THE DOXOLOGIES OR SUBSCRIPTIONS—THE TITLES OR SUPERSCRPTIONS—EWALD'S CHRONOLOGICAL ARRANGEMENT—EWALD CHARACTERISED.

LATER than I hoped, but sooner than I have sometimes feared, comes this fresh contribution to the study of the Hagiographa ; the enforced delay, however painful, may at least have added somewhat to the maturity of the book. I need scarcely say that it would have been impossible to cover the whole subject of the Psalms in a single volume. I made it my object, therefore, to diminish the amount of necessary exposition by bestowing special care on the clearness of the translation, reserving the higher criticism and the consideration of psalm-theology for another occasion. Circumstances led me, uncertain whether I should proceed further, to prepare a translation first, and to accept the offer of my publishers to include it in the *Parchment Library*. That translation is here repeated, with numerous corrections which do not, I trust, materially affect the style. Where a literary as well as a scholarly standard has been aimed at, it is desirable to exercise caution in alteration. For the friendly reception accorded to my version of 1884 on both sides of the Atlantic, I can but express mingled surprise and gratitude. It confirms me in the belief that the careful but still in many respects somewhat antique Revised Version does not sufficiently reveal to the educated reader the thoughtful, radiant beauty of Hebrew poetry. That he has not been uncared for by the Revisers is indeed evident ; a Revision merely

intended for use in churches, or for simple, uneducated readers, would have contained far fewer modifications and innovations. But his wants could only be satisfied by (to quote Dr. De Witt's words) 'independent, individual effort,' and the Revision Company had neither individuality nor independence. It is of course true—and most happily true—that no single translator, however independent, could fully meet the demands of educated Bible-readers. Next to fidelity, he is bound to cultivate ease and clearness of expression; otherwise, instead of meaning too much, his version will certainly to the common ear and eye mean too little. But he has also to warn the reader that the waters which run so clear are deep, and that it is often difficult to determine between different interpretations of some group of words, or different forms of a single vague idea, the key to which must be derived from the context, not to speak here of the frequent uncertainty of the text. It is possible to do this by marginal notes, with or without comment; but evidently the reader can judge best of the effect of a different rendering by seeing it in a continuous version. One cannot therefore too strongly recommend the comparison of such careful independent versions of the Psalter as those of Kay, Perowne, and De Witt, to which may be joined Reuss' French translation, and this not only from the point of view of literature, but from that of devotion. For I fear that there is too much truth in the late Professor Brewer's remark that the present generation, almost too familiar with the Church-versions, 'has broken down the strong meaning of his (David's) words into the devotional dust of vague generalities.'

The two pleas which I have urged for independent translations of the Psalter—viz. their superior intelligibility and their devotional helpfulness—were, I suppose, advanced long since in the Reformation period. So at least I can better account for the constant popularity among the educated classes of Greek and Latin metrical versions of the Psalter, at least in the lands of the Reformation (for at Rome there were those who compared such classicized Psalters to 'seed committed to the arid sand,' the 'sand' being not the classic but the Hebrew element¹). We may observe in the first place that the modern literary style did but slowly develope; to many educated persons the classic tongues seemed alone to furnish a worthy mould for the

¹ H. Stephanus, *Liber Psalmorum Davidis cum Cathol. Exposit. Ecclesiasticâ* (Par. 1562), quoted by Tholuck.

poetry of Zion. To us indeed the idea of Homeric and Virgilian grafts on the Davidic stock is an æsthetic offence, and it is rightly regarded as one of the merits of Herder that, unlike the 'elegant' Lowth, he forgot his Horace and Æschylus when he read David and Job. But if even Lowth was blind to this late-discovered law of good taste, can we wonder that in the previous century a greater scholar than either Lowth or Herder (J. Spencer, author of *De Legibus Hebræorum*) called the Cambridge professor Duport's *Metaphrasis* in Homeric verse (Lond. 1674) 'golden,' and that earlier still the friend of the author of the *Faerie Queene* delightedly asks—¹ 'What Festivall Hymnes so divinely dainty as the swete Psalmes of King David, royally translated by Buchanan'?

Certain at least it is, that these pseudo-classic works served a good purpose in their day. They promoted the enjoyment of the Psalms as continuous poems and artistic wholes—an enjoyment too seldom known to Bible-readers in our own time. My next observation may to some appear stranger, but I cannot help making it. These faulty and hybrid compositions were true helps to piety and kindled the flame of devotion. The frequent use of the Church-versions was even then seen to have its dangers; 'devotional dust' was no support for faith in those rough times of persecution. Personal edification was Olympia Morata's motive for translating the Psalms into Greek verse in 1552, and religious interests dictated the retention of Buchanan's Psalms in Scottish and in some English schools. As late even as 1722 we find a Scottish gentleman (Sir Patrick Hume, of Polwarth) declaring that this Psalter, which he could repeat from end to end, had been his comfort by night and by day, and most of all when, like the royal psalmist, he had been hunted into dark hiding-places.² He was among the last of a good old school, brought up to value most in religion a strong and direct faith, and nourished intellectually on the lucid clearness of the classic models. To us the same escape from the combined familiarity and obscurity of the Church-versions is offered by translations such as I have mentioned, to which I venture diffidently to add my own in its present revised form.

I trust that I need not defend myself for deviating so often from

¹ Gabriel Harvey, *Four Letters and certaine Sonnets*, 1592, p. 48. (There is a copy of this curious work in the Bodleian.)

² See quotation in Ker's *The Psalms in History and Biography*, p. 182.

the Massoretic text. I agree with an old commentator on Isaiah, earnestly commended to me by the late Dr. Pusey (alas ! at twenty-one, I found his noble work too voluminous)—need I mention the name of Vitringa?—‘Præstat dicere, si res ita sit, nos sensum Vatis non perspicere, quam dura et voluntaria ei impingere.’

Yes, ‘voluntaria’—that is the right word. Those who, out of simple conscientiousness, emend the Hebrew text are oftentimes accused of ‘subjectivity.’ The term is then used in a bad sense ; but I think that a subjectivity which forms and disciplines and tests itself by critical methods and canons is nothing to be ashamed of. Where long reflexion has convinced me that the mutilations of time have rendered exegesis impossible, I have either left a blank in my version, or else sought for a worthy rendering, based upon some natural emendation. The critical notes, which, out of regard for my readers and my printers, I have limited to the most essential points, will, I hope, account for my innovations.

Of the commentary proper, much need not be said here. This too could easily have been expanded into twice the size ; it would then perhaps have been easier reading. Delitzsch has somewhere remarked that the Oriental writer reckons largely on the intellectual cooperation of his reader, and that even Oriental commentaries themselves need commentaries. I trust that there is not an unpardonable amount of this Orientalism in my book, though I confess that I think it no hardship myself to *work* on a good commentary. Some fair products of Christian scholarship there are which it is an education both for head and for heart to read. And though this book falls far short of its ideal, yet of one thing those who work at it may be assured—that it has been written from love, and contains nothing which the author has not found helpful to himself. He has enjoyed this Book of Praises alike for its poetry, for its critical and exegetical problems, and for its rich historical and religious significance. The messages which, both in dark days and in bright, it has borne to him, he has endeavoured to hand on to others. He does not therefore compete with his predecessors, nor seek to supplant them. The Psalm-country is wide and full of interest ; each traveller may see something fresh, though not without toil and preparation. I know that it is also a ‘holy land.’

Thou, Jehovah, art the Holy One,
Enthroned upon the praises of Israel.

These Spirit-taught utterances of the heart can, like the 'throne-bearing' cherubim, at any moment bring Him nigh : thus I venture to paraphrase the passage. I know and feel this. The Psalter is a Bible within the Bible, and has the twofold sacredness of its origin and its associations. I have lost no fair opportunity of showing my sense of this ; or rather, as I hope, a fragrant breath from the hills has followed me throughout. I have not said everything, however ; this is virtually the first volume of a treatise on the Psalms. Will the reader kindly remember this, and accept me as a sympathetic guide to the outermost part of the meaning of this deep Book ?

Before passing on, I would offer a few indispensable hints on some technical points. And first, let me account for the alternative title 'The Praises of Israel.' One cannot, I think, be very grateful for the awkward foreign word Psalm, which conveys no definite meaning to the English reader, and which we owe to the old Latin version based upon the Septuagint. With the Greek-speaking Jews it was otherwise ; ψαλμὸς (= תְּהִלָּה, Syr. *mazmûrâ*¹) gave them a truthful though not a complete description of the nature of the poems in this Book, which are in fact songs or poems set to music (and partly at least to the music of stringed instruments) for use in the temple and the synagogue.² In like manner, ψαλτήριον (properly a stringed instrument described by St. Augustine on Ps. xxxii. ; cf. the *psalterin* of the Book of Daniel) is a metaphorical expression for the collection of such songs or poems : the idiom is well reproduced by Bythner in the title of his once popular analysis of the Psalms called *Lyra Davidis*. But even if 'psalm' expressed more to us than it does, there is a title of this precious book which throws a brighter light upon its contents, and which is therefore even more preferable to the Greek title than Koheleth is to Ecclesiastes. The Jews in fact called the Psalter by

¹ The Arabic word *sabûr*, used in the Korân (see Sur. iv. 61, xxi. 105) for the Psalter, may, perhaps, be a mutilated form of *mazûr* = *mazmûr*, and so be virtually an Aramaic loan-word. More probably it was used in this sense by Mohammed on account of its resemblance to *mazmûr*, but was really derived from a S. Semitic root *sabara* 'to write,' whence also comes *sabur* 'Scriptures' (Sur. iii. 181). Comp. T. Fraenkel, *Die aram. Fremdwörter im Arabischen* (Leiden, 1886), p. 248.

² Strictly speaking, of course, תְּהִלָּה and ψαλμὸς mean the music to which the song (שִׁיר, מִשְׁכָּח) was set. This distinction is clearly expressed by Gregory of Nyssa, quoted by Delitzsch (*Psalms*, E. T., i. 132).

the expressive title 'praises' or 'songs of praise' ¹—הַלְלֵיָהוּ (shortened into הַלְלֵיָהוּ or, with the Aramaic termination, הַלְלֵיָהוּ). This is attested for the third century A.D. by Hippolytus (ed. Lagarde, p. 188), 'Εβραῖοι περιέγραψαν τὴν βίβλον Σέφρα θελεῖμ ; ² and Jerome after him, in the preface to his own translation of the Psalter, says, 'Titulus ipse hebræicus, Sephear Theallim, quod interpretatur volumen hymnorum.' The Talmudic writers too draw attention to the eucharistic element as the most essential in the book. Obviously the name is pre-Talmudic, though of a date long subsequent to the return from the Exile. The long post-Exile period had many vicissitudes ; but this title could only have been given when the circumstances of the Church-nation were such as to inspire jubilant thanksgiving—some part of the age of the Ptolemies naturally suggests itself. But is the title an appropriate one for the *earlier* psalms? Yes ; for the sympathetic reader cannot fail to notice an undertone of praise even in the more melancholy psalms. Ps. lxxxviii. is the solitary exception. The reason of this is clear. It is a foundation-truth with all good Israelites that, as one psalmist expresses it,

Jehovah upholds all them that fall,
and lifts up all them that are bowed down (cxlv. 14);

or, to quote a passage from a less joyous psalm specially dear to the greatest of Christian poets (Dante, *Parad.* xxv. 73-75),

And they that know thy name will trust in thee,
since thou, Jehovah, forsakest not those that enquire after thee (ix. 11).

It is possible indeed that an earlier title for the liturgical songs of the Israelites was הַפְּלוֹת or 'prayers' (see lxxii. 20, where the Septuagint narrows the meaning too much ³ by rendering οἱ ὕμνοι). But, considering that the title 'praises' or 'songs of praise' comes to us recommended by the authority and religious experience of centuries,

¹ A synonymous title for the Psalter, which won favour as containing the most sacred Name, was Hallelujah (*Midrash Tillim*, c. 1, cited by Fürst, *Der Kanon*, &c., p. 65). In a narrower sense, eight (or in the Sept. fifteen) psalms may be called Hallelujah psalms (from their titles), and in a still stricter sense the five last psalms in the Book are technically so termed.

² Eusebius, quoting Hippolytus' list of books, gives the title Σφαρθελλεῖμ (Burton's text).

³ See on xlii. 9, and note that the famous liturgical forms known from their earlier number as 'the eighteen' are called collectively the *Tefillah* ('prayer'), though the concluding Benedictions might give them a claim to be called the *Tehillah* ('praise'). *Tefillah* occurs in the heading of five psalms—xvii., lxxxvi., xc., cii., cxlii.

and that even the great Sufferer in the Psalm-book speaks of the historic, self-revealing God as 'enthroned upon the praises of Israel' (Ps. xxii. 4), we shall do well to accustom ourselves to the intelligent use of the title מִלְּהַלְלָהּ or 'praises,' and to make it a rule of our exegesis to look out in every psalm for an element of praise. I therefore describe the Psalter as a collection of the liturgical forms in which, 'in trouble and in joy,' the Jewish Church embodied its praiseful prayers and prayerful praises.

On the division of the Psalter (or Praise-book) St. Jerome has some interesting remarks in the Preface from which I have already quoted.

'Scio quosdam putare Psalterium in quinque libros esse divisum, ut, ubicumque apud LXX. interpretes scriptum est γένοιτο γένοιτο, id est fiat fiat, finis librorum sit, pro quo in hebræo legitur amen amen. Nos autem hebræorum auctoritatem sequuti et maxime apostolorum, qui semper in Novo Testamento Psalmorum librum nominant, unum volumen asserimus.'

In spite of the father of Christian Biblical criticism, it is worth while to emphasize the fivefold division of the Psalter, as a fact of some historical significance. The antiquity of the arrangement is attested by the presence of the very same formulæ which in our Hebrew text close the first four books (see xli. 14, lxxii. 19, lxxxix. 53, cvi. 48) in the Septuagint version. It is possible, and I think even probable, that the development of a fivefold out of an earlier fourfold division was held to be justified by the analogy of the Pentateuch. This theory is expressed in the third century in a remark of Hippolytus,—Τοῦτό σε μὴ παρέλθοι, ὦ φιλόκαλε, ὅτι καὶ τὸ ψαλτήριον εἰς πέντε δι᾿ ἑλκον βιβλία οἱ Ἑβραῖοι, ὥστε εἶναι καὶ αὐτο ἄλλην πεντάτευχον (ap. Epiphani., *De Pond. et Mens.* c. 5). Similarly the Midrash Tillim, referred to above, in its introductory comparison of the sweetest of singers with the great legislator, points out that 'Moses gave them (the Israelites) the five fifths (i.e. parts) of the Law, and corresponding to these David gave them the book of Tehillim ('praises') in which are five books.' The remark is a suggestive one; it seems to mean this—that the *Praise-book* is the answer of the worshipping community to the demands made by its Lord in the Torah, the reflexion of the external standard of faith and obedience in the utterance of the believing heart.

May we venture to go a step further, and say with Grätz that not

only the number of the books but also that of the several Psalms (150) in the Psalter was arranged on the analogy of the Pentateuch? It is a well-known fact that the Law was divided into as many Sedarim (or 'orderings') as would occupy those Sabbaths which did not coincide with a festival in a cycle of three years.¹ The number of the Sedarim is variously given as 154 (so Jacob ben-Khayim in the Massora, though he only enumerates 153), 167, and 175;² and there is no reasonable doubt that at any rate the lowest of these numbers was influenced by considerations based upon the calendar. But is there any proof that lessons were taken from the Psalter in the synagogue-worship³ even in 44 A.D., which Grätz boldly gives as the approximate date of the Septuagint version of the Psalms (our earliest evidence as to the number 150)? Has it even been ascertained that the three years' cycle of Pentateuch lessons is as old as the Septuagint Psalter (upon any view as to the date of this version)? Certainly if we could answer the latter question in the affirmative, we might plausibly suppose that the number 154 of the Pentateuch Sedarim, partly influenced those who brought out the number of 150 psalms. Both in Palestine and in Alexandria, great importance seems to have been attached to this number. On the main point the two great churches were agreed; but the Greek-speaking Jews united our psalms ix. and x., and cxiv. and cxv., which involved dividing our psalms cxvi. and cxlvii. In Palestine, however, there were some who counted only 147 psalms, 'according to the number of the years of Jacob.'⁴ This meant uniting Psalms i. and ii. (David's favourite psalms, it was said, begin and end with אֲשֶׁר־י), xlii. and xliii., lxx. and lxxi. Kimchi, combining Psalms cxiv. and cxv., makes 149, a reckoning which also frequently occurs in both Karaite and Rabbanite MSS.

Next, as to the subscriptions of the first four books (excluding lxxii. 20 for a special reason⁵). To us they may serve no other purpose

¹ The three years' cycle (for which see *Megilla* 29 b) continued in some synagogues as late as the times of Maimonides and Benjamin of Tudela (Zunz, *Die gottesdienstlichen Vorträge*, p. 410, note a).

² See, besides Zunz, *ibid.*, p. 4, Theodor in Grätz's *Monatsschrift*, 1887, p. 361. Grätz (*Die Psalmen*, i. 9) speaks of 150 sections of the Pentateuch, but I know not on what authority.

³ See Herzfeld, *Geschichte des Volkes Jisrael*, iii. 216, and comp. Acts xiii. 15, 27.

⁴ (Talm. Jerus.) *Shabbath*, c. 16, *Midrash Tillim*, c. 104, and other references in Fürst, *Der Kanon*, &c., p. 71.

⁵ Missing the fact that lxxii. 20 is a subscription to a whole group of psalms

than that of 'boundary-stones' (Delitzsch); but properly speaking they are liturgical doxologies, as appears from the fact that in 1 Chron. xvi. 35, 36 the doxology in Ps. cvi. 48 (together with *v.* 47) is attached to the artificial psalm which precedes, with introductory invitation to the worshippers 'and say ye,' and that in Neh. ix. 5 the Levites summon the congregation to 'bless Jehovah their God from everlasting to everlasting.' A Talmudic tradition illustrates this. It states that to every benediction a response was uttered by the congregation which in the temple took this form: 'Blessed for ever be the name of the glory of his kingdom,' and elsewhere consisted of a simple 'Amen.'¹ It is certainly strange that these liturgical doxologies should only occur at the end of four particular psalms, especially if we consider the fondness of the later Jews for benediction-formulæ; and it is one of Grätz's more probable conjectures that a benediction was usual at the end of every psalm, though to save space the scribes only wrote it at the end of Books I.-IV. This will account for the doxology appended to a composition in 1 Chron. xvi. mainly drawn from Psalms cv. and xcvi., which have no benediction either in the Hebrew or in the Greek text. It would seem, too, though further evidence is desirable, that the psalms were sometimes designated *Berakhoth* or 'benedictions.'²

On the subject of the titles or superscriptions, I hope to write elsewhere. So far as they relate to the music of the psalms, we may perhaps assume that they come neither from the age of the national independence, nor yet from that of the Greek dominion, but mainly from the beginning of the Persian period, when Ezra and Nehemiah so systematically reorganised the temple-services. So far as they relate to the authorship of the psalms, we may refer them partly to that and partly to a later period. They represent, as I have said elsewhere, 'traditional opinions of ancient critical schools—opinions, however, which were not universally held, as the Hebrew headings do not altogether agree with those in the ancient versions. At an earlier day much labour was rather unprofitably spent in defending the Davidic authorship of psalms transparently non-Davidic. An opposite tendency now prevails. Of the three most distinguished

(see note), Calvin actually supposes that Ps. lxxii. is the last prayer of David put into a poetical form by Solomon.

¹ (Talm. Jerus.) *Berakhoth*, 14 c; (Talm. Bab.) *Taanith*, 16 b.

² See Grätz, 'Die Doxologien in den Psalmen,' in his *Monatsschrift* for 1872, pp. 481-496; but comp. Perowne, *The Psalms*, i. 73, ii. 267.

recent critics, Ewald acknowledges only 11 entire psalms and some fragments of psalms as Davidic, Hitzig 14, and Delitzsch 44. All of these agree as to the Davidic authorship of Psalms iii., iv., vii., viii., xi., xviii., xix. 1-7, and two out of three as to that of Psalms ix., x., xii., xiii., xv.-xviii., xix. 8-14, xxiv., xxix., xxxii., ci. Kuenen, however, will admit no Davidic psalms, though Davidic passages may perhaps have been inserted. In any case, it is quite certain that there are none in the last three books, and the probability is that Ewald's is the most conservative view of the headings at present tenable.' Need I add that I merely record his position without either endorsing it¹ or attaching any special weight to his authority? 'Non enim me cuiquam emancipavi; nullius nomen fero: multum magnorum virorum iudicio credo, aliquid et meo vindico. Nam illi quoque non inventa, sed quærenda nobis reliquerunt.'² I am in no other sense a disciple of Ewald than that in which Biblical scholars generally must continue to be so, as long as lofty ideals and noble achievements are had in honour. A recent American writer on the Psalms has called Ewald 'the great denier:' the expression is singularly ill-chosen; Ewald is much more moderate in denying than in asserting. Especially is this the case in his chronological rearrangement of the Psalms (first published in 1839); which might have been less defective if Ewald had not attempted it so early in his career. We must not therefore accept his contributions to the conservative side of psalm-criticism without a careful testing; as a critic, he stands decidedly higher in his other works. And yet how much may be learnt even from this premature attempt! How much of permanent value it contains! With the hasty assertions how much solid truth is intermingled! And passing from the critical sphere, how precious upon the whole are its exegetical qualities! What a distinct view of the connexion of thought, and above all what a lively emotional sympathy with the psalmists! This indeed is a characteristic which Ewald has in common with the accomplished scholar to whom this volume is dedicated, and it comes from that personal religious experience which alone can qualify any one to be a sympathetic interpreter of the Old Testament saints.³ May I not

¹ Comp. *Parchment Library Psalms*, Introd., pp. xi.-xvi. All that can be said for a more conservative view than Ewald's will be found in Delitzsch, or more clearly expressed in Perowne.

² Seneca, *Ep. ad Lucil.*, xlv.

³ See 'Franz Delitzsch,' by Prof. Salmond, *Expositor*, 1886 (1), pp. 456-471, and 'The Life and Works of Heinrich Ewald,' by the present writer, *ibid.*, 1886 (2), pp. 241-265, 361-376.

then on this ground couple the preceding caution with an equally emphatic statement of Ewald's claims not only upon our admiration but upon our reverence? We need not adopt his or any man's chronology of the Psalter, but we may obtain from him the secret of the reconciliation of faith and criticism, and so like him maintain our spiritual ardour amidst the coldest and driest philological analysis. Would that the serene atmosphere which envelopes his best exegetical and historical work had more completely penetrated his outward life ! Would that his spiritual development had been less tragically interrupted ! We may learn many a lesson from the imperfections of our best teachers. But I must pause : we have lingered long enough in the vestibule. Let us now press on with alert minds and uplifted hearts into the sanctuary of the 'praises of Israel.'

NOTICE.—Asterisks in the translation indicate either that an incurable corruption is suspected in the Hebrew text, or that words appear to have dropped out which cannot even conjecturally be supplied. When, however, such words can be conjecturally restored the English equivalent is generally enclosed in *square* brackets.

THE PSALMS.

BOOK I.

PSALM I.

IT is mentioned in the Talmud (*Berakhoth*, 9 *b*) that Psalms i. and ii. form a single Parasha; and this was formerly the case in many more Hebrew MSS. than at present (Euthymius, in Wettstein on Acts xiii. 33). According to another arrangement in some MSS. of the Hebrew text and of Sept. this psalm is not Ps. i., but simply a prologue. Originally, it would seem, it was prefatory to Books I. and II. The date of the psalm is therefore specially important; it is unwise to decide too hastily, on the ground of the parallelism of *vv.* 3, 4 and Jer. xvii. 5-8, that the psalm must have been written not later than the age of Jeremiah.

- 1 Happy the man that has not walked in the counsel of the ungodly,
nor stood in the way of sinners,
nor sat in the company of scoffers!
- 2 But in the law of Jehovah is his delight,
and on his law meditates he day and night.
- 3 For he is like a tree planted by water-courses,
that brings forth its fruit in due season,
and whose leaf withers not;
and whatever he does, makes he to prosper.
- 4 Not so are the ungodly,
but they are like the chaff which the wind drives away.
- 5 Therefore the ungodly cannot stand in the judgment,
nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.
- 6 For Jehovah takes knowledge of the way of the righteous,
but the way of the ungodly perishes.

1 **Happy.** Lit., 'O the happiness (or, good fortune) of;' *not* 'blessed' (the word in Jer. xvii. 7) —to quote Carlyle's famous distinction (De Witt) is not in point. The psalmist, standing aside like a Greek chorus, congratulates the

righteous man. So Moses before his death exclaims, 'Happy art thou, O Israel' (Deut. xxxiii. 29). The external rewards of righteousness will sooner or later be assigned (*'ashrê* implies this even in xxxii. 1, 2, xciv. 12); one of the leading

ideas of the psalmists, and naturally put forward in the prologue. May we not add that the 'generous universal invocation of all nature' which forms the *envoi* of the Psalter supplies a necessary balance to this heart-searching announcement?—

That has not walked, &c. In this and the two next clauses both verbs and nouns have by many been regarded as forming a climax—by Ibn Ezra and Kimchi not less than Hitzig and Delitzsch. Hupfeld and Hengstenberg, however, take the clauses as synonymously parallel, and there is no adequate reason against this, which is the simpler view. Three forms of a corrupting association with the wicked are delicately distinguished (cf. Judg. v. 10, 'ye that ride . . . sit . . . walk'): for the first, cf. Mic. vi. 16, Jer. vii. 24; for the second, Prov. iv. 14; for the third, xxvi. 4, 5, Jer. xv. 17.—**The ungodly.** Whatever be the root-meaning of *rāshā'*, the word is certainly the opposite of *ḥaddiq*. If the latter means 'one who adheres strictly to the divine rule or standard,' the former signifies 'one who neglects this rule or standard.' In Proverbs and Job, it is clearly used of anyone who, at the bidding of his passions, violates the divinely appointed laws of ordinary morality; the wise men had reached that distinction between the ritual and the purely moral which was obscured again when the lawbook became predominant. There is consequently no occasion (except in Ps. cxix.) to assign to *rāshā'*, 'the ungodly,' the sense which *ἀσεβής* has in Josephus and *ἀνομος* in 1 Macc., viz. 'one unfaithful to the true religion.' Sometimes, however, it means 'heathen enemy' (see on iii. 8).—**Company** (as cvii. 32), almost = 'club-meeting.' 'Seat' (De Witt) seems too literal; cf. Ar. *mejlis* 'social gathering' (prop. 'seat').—**Scoffers.** The only place in the Psalms where this word *leṣtm* occurs. In Prov. it is frequent in the sense of one who despises that which is holy, and avoids

the company of the nobler 'wise men,' but yet in his own vain way seeks for truth: his character is marked by arrogance, as that of the wise is characterised by devout caution (*εὐλάβεια*); see Prov. xiv. 16, xxi. 24, and cf. *Job and Solomon*, pp. 119, 151. To the psalmist, as to the author of Prov. xxx. 5, the volume of revelation is sufficient for all the legitimate needs of human reason.

2 But in the law, &c. The 'law' (*tora*) may here include the prophets (including the prophetic-historical books) as well as the Pentateuch; *tora*, in fact, before the time of Malachi, is generally used of the revelations of God's will made through the prophets (cf. *The Prophecies of Isaiah*, ed. 3, i. 6). In later Jewish literature, where nothing is said to the contrary, *tora* means the collection of canonical writings (see *Sanhedrin*, 90 b). Comp. Eccles. xxxix. 1, 'But he that giveth his mind to the law of the Most High and meditates thereon, will seek out the wisdom of all the ancients, and be occupied in prophecies.' I presume, however, that our psalmist would have placed all other books second in rank to the 'law' properly so called, in the spirit of Josh. i. 8.

3 See the fuller description in Jer. xvii. 8, and comp. the application made in *Pirke Abhoth*, iii. 17.—**For he is.** So our language requires us to render. Part of the meaning of a Hebrew clause has to be gathered from the context, and it is clear that *v.* 3 unfolds the meaning of the *μακαρισμός* in *v.* 1; the explanatory particle 'for' is therefore justified. But the Hebrew, through the 'vav consecutive,' states something else, which in English we should leave to be inferred. The literal rendering is, *So he becomes* (viz. as a consequence of studying the Law), and this is adopted by De Witt.—**Like a tree, &c.** The writer tacitly forbids us to specialise; he implies a garden with 'trees of all kind of fruit' (Eccles. ii. 5), such as the vine

(Ezek. xix. 10), the palm (Ps. xcii. 12, 13), the pomegranate (Cant. vi. 7), and the apple (Cant. ii. 3). Mohammed is equally vague; 'Seest thou not to what God likeneth a good word [the preaching of Islam]? To a good tree; its root firmly fixed, and its branches in the heaven: yielding its fruit in all seasons by the will of its Lord' (*Korân*, xiv. 29). The psalmist's application of the figure is not so very different from Mohammed's; the life of his happy man is one in which the good word of the Law has taken form.—**By water-courses**, i.e. by artificial streams for irrigation (comp. Eccles. ii. 5, 6). See on xlvi. 5, lxx. 10.—**Makes he to prosper**. The old doctrine of Hebrew faith, so common in Proverbs, that prosperity attends the righteous, is distinctly adopted. The psalmist, however, is well aware that the reward may be delayed; hence he refers in *vv.* 4-6 to a sifting process through which the professedly righteous community (*v.* 5; comp. clix. 1) will pass.

4 **Like the chaff**, &c. Threshing-floors, as Isa. xvii. 13 suggests, were usually in high situations, where the wind would readily carry the chaff away. The winnower beats out the wheat or barley with a stick, and then throws it up in the air; the grain and the crushed straw (Heb. *tebhen*) fall in heaps, but the chaff is blown away. Thus the figure is a comprehensive one. It is implied that a winnower has been at work; that is, God, who in each successive judgment winnows the 'corn of his floor' (Isa. xxi. 10). Comp. Matt. iii. 12. In Jer. xvii. 6 the corresponding simile is that of a stunted desert plant,¹ which æsthetically considered furnishes a better contrast to the figure of the tree

planted by the watercourses. Comp. Wisdom v. 14 ('like chaff-dust,' *χνοῦς*).

5 **Therefore**. The psalmist continues in a prophetic tone. He announces that the ungodly who so scandalise the pious of his day will, when another judgment-day comes round, be separated from the true Israel. This he infers from the fact, which is within his own experience, that the ungodly are 'like the chaff,' i.e. sooner or later meet with a just retribution.

6 **Takes knowledge of**, i.e. is interested in, and takes trouble about. Cf. xxxi. 7, xxxvii. 18; Gen. xviii. 19, &c.—**The way**, &c. 'Way' here means not 'behaviour' (as Prov. xii. 15, &c.), but the outward circumstances of a man's lot; comp. xxvii. 11, 'Lead me on an even path;' xxxvii. 5, 'Roll (the care for) thy way upon Jehovah;' and ii. 12, (literally) 'and (lest) ye perish in respect of way' (or destiny). The parallelism in the two members of the distich is not complete; we might fill it up thus:

For Jehovah notices (and makes to prosper) the fortunes of the righteous, but (disregards and) sends ruin to the fortunes of the ungodly.

—**Perishes** (*yôbhêdhû*). Hupfeld, 'shall go astray'—as a path fades away into the desert; comp. Job vi. 18, '(the caravans) go up into the desert and lose their way' (*yôbhêdhû*). Here, as often, there may be a double sense; an image of a fading path may have floated before the writer's mind; but the derived sense of destruction is also present to him, and is obviously meant to be supreme, 'perishing' being the necessary antithesis to 'making to prosper' (*v.* 3). Comp. Jer. xii. 1, 'Why doth the way of the ungodly prosper?'

PSALM II.

THIS psalm falls into four nearly equal strophes. The first of these describes a rebellion of subject-kings against the Messianic king; the second, Jehovah's destruction of the rebels. Then the poet turns back,

¹ For another view, see on cii. 18.

and introduces the Messianic king reporting a divine oracle in his favour; after which, assuming the rebellion to be in progress, he warns the kings of the earth to return to their allegiance. (Consequently *v.* 5 is virtually a conditional prophecy.) Compare Orelli's translation and exposition, *Old Testament Prophecy*, p. 158, &c.

Many critics hold that the poem has a basis of contemporary fact. Without discussing their conflicting opinions, I may at least state my own, viz. that it refers not to any of the historical kings regarded as typically Messianic, but to the ideal or Messianic king himself.¹ So thought the doctors of the Synagogue (see Talm. Bab., *Berakhoth* 7 *b*, *Succa* 52 *a*), and the mediæval Rabbis (see Rashi and Kimchi²), and this view is implied in the Judaizing portion of the Apocalypse (Rev. ii. 7, xii. 5, xix. 15). Exegetical considerations point in the same direction. The psalm is a lyric echo and interpretation of the promises in 2 Sam. vii. 12, 14-16 (*v.* 13 is certainly a later insertion), and is in this respect parallel to part of Ps. lxxxix. Ps. ii. differs, however, from the latter psalm in its tone of joyous confidence. Neither psalmist sees as yet either an empire or a 'son of Jehovah' worthy of the promise, but whereas the author of Ps. lxxxix. is content with laying Israel's low estate before his God, the other can forget the grey realities of the present in the glories which he anticipates by faith.

How much is inevitably lost in translating (Dante would say 'transmuting') such a psalm as this! The first six verses especially afford a specimen of the utmost art of Hebrew poetry. The words seem to live and breathe, and the rhythm to paint the actions. But the 'musical band' of which Dante spoke is broken, and he who would see how metre and rhyme and assonance may be skilfully though irregularly employed must read this psalm in the Hebrew.

- 1 Wherefore do the nations throng together,
and the peoples meditate vanity?
- 2 The kings of the earth stand forth,
and the sovereigns take counsel together,
against Jehovah and against his anointed :
- 3 'Let us tear off their bonds' (say they),
'and cast from us their cords.'
- 4 He who is seated in the heavens laughs,
the Lord mocks at them.
- 5 Then speaks he unto them in his anger,
and in his hot wrath confounds them :
- 6 ' . . . When *I* have established my king
upon Zion my holy mountain.'

The King speaks.

- 7 'I will relate Jehovah's decree :
he said unto me, Thou art my son,
I have this day begotten thee.
- 8 Ask of me, and I will grant thee

¹ See Eichhorn's vigorous summing up in his *Allgemeine Bibliothek*, 1787, i. 534-5; and on the Christian fulfilment of this psalm cf. *The Prophecies of Isaiah*, vol. ii. Essay 3; Maurice, *Moral and Metaphysical Philosophy*, i. 15.

² Ibn Ezra gives a double interpretation, applying it either to David or to the Messiah, but prefers the strict Messianic interpretation as clearer.

- nations for thine inheritance,
 and the earth's utmost parts for thy possession.
 9 Thou shalt break them with a mace of iron ;
 thou shalt shiver them like a potter's vessel.'
 10 Now therefore, ye kings, deal wisely ;
 be admonished, ye judges of the earth.
 11 Serve Jehovah with fear,
 be in trembling agony.
 12 * * *
 lest he be angry, and ye go to ruin ;
 for his anger kindleth easily :
 happy all those that take refuge in him !

2 The kings of the earth.

Both in the Old Testament and in the New this phrase has a very wide reference ; it cannot mean simply the kings of the nations round about Israel. See lxxvi. 13, lxxxix. 28, cii. 16, cxxxviii. 4, cxlviii. 11, Lam. iv. 12, Rev. i. 5 (and elsewhere). The picture in this verse is like that in Joel iii. 2, Zech. xiv. 2, 3, except that the nations of the earth are here regarded as having previously been subject to Jehovah's Anointed One. (Ps. xlviii. 5, lxxxiii. 6 are not parallel.)

4 **Laughs.** So xxxvii. 13, lix. 9. But here the mention of the heavens reminds us of the Thunder-god, whose 'wild raging' is pictured in the myths as 'scornful laughter.' In the Hebrew of the next verse we seem to hear the thunder's roll, and see the lightning-flash. The Biblical writers had a fixed purpose of utilising all that they could of the ancient vocabulary of the myth-forming stage of thought. The thunder is God's voice ; the heaven is His impregnable fortress.

5 **Then,** i.e. when the crisis has arrived, and all bids fair for the success of the revolt. Comp. Isa. xviii. 5.

6 **When I.** Literally, 'And I.' Comp. l. 16, 17, 'What right hast thou, &c., whereas thou (literally, and thou).' So here we must understand, 'What right have ye to independent action, when I—the King of kings—have established my

royal deputy?'—**Zion,** either Mount Zion properly so called (i.e. the eastern hill of old Jerusalem, on which the 'city of David' stood, and—on the northern summit—the Temple), or, poetically, Jerusalem (comp. on xlviii. 2). The latter is the more probable view, if the psalm is post-Davidic.

7 **The decree of Jehovah** (see crit. note). The mention of the 'establishment' of a king (*v.* 6) leads to the recital of the antecedent 'decree' (or 'statute'). Strictly speaking, this 'decree' is confined to *v.* 7 ; *vv.* 8, 9 have more the character of an 'oracle' (comp. Ps. cx. 1).—**Thou art my son.** So, 'he shall call upon me, Thou art my father' (lxxxix. 28 ; see note) ; both passages echo 2 Sam. vii. 14, and imply membership of a society or college of (in some sense) super-human beings.—**This day.** We may explain equally well with reference to the day of the king's birth and to that of his enthronement. I incline to the former view. So Assurbanipal says at the beginning of his Annals that the gods 'in the body of his mother have made him to rule Assyria ;' and the god Ra says to Ramses II., 'I am thy father ; by me are begotten all thy members as divine.' So too Amenophis II. says, 'He made me lord of the living when I was yet a child in the nest.' Comp. also the *Alexandrine* translation of cx. 3.

8 **The earth's utmost parts.**

The king of Egypt claimed a *de jure* sovereignty over the world as son and heir of the sun (see Renouf, *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 162). The Assyrian kings were more sober in their inscriptions (see, however, Sargon, *Records of the Past*, xi. 33). There is no evidence, nor probability, that the Israelitish kings put forward any such claims as the 'king' puts forward here. If this were an accession-psalm we might compare lxxii. 8, where among other idealistic anticipations occurs the hope that the young king may have dominion 'unto the ends of the earth.' But it is no anticipation that we have here, but a promise actually fulfilled. Observe that the promise outruns the revelation in 2 Sam. vii. (but comp. lxxxix. 26, 28). Are not all these psalm-passages (ii. 8, lxxii. 8, lxxxix. 26, 28) dependent on the *Messiah*-promise in Zech. ix. 10?

9 Thou shalt break them. Comp. cx. 5. Not to be explained as a description of the habitually severe rule of the Messiah, but as a prophecy of what must happen if the nations persist in revolting from the appointed king.—**With a mace of iron.** Not with the sceptre of peace, but with the spiked iron mace used in war, which bears the same name (*shébbet*), the *σιδηρεὴν κορύνην* of II. vii. 140. Throughout Asia the history of this implement was doubtless the same; the shepherd's oaken club (see on xxiii. 4) developed on the one hand into the sceptre [comp. Assyr. *ri'u* = (1) shepherd, (2) ruler], and on the other into the formidable weapon a picture of which is given by Rawlinson, *Ancient Monarchies*, i. 459. 'Mace' would have been the best rendering of *shébbet* in our version of Num. xxiv. 17, 2 Sam. xviii. 14, and of *matteh* in Hab. iii. 14.—**Like a potter's vessel.** So the Assyrian kings (e.g. Sargon) speak

of crushing countries like earthenware (*kima haspâti*). See Norris, *Assyrian Dict.*, ii. 413.

11 Be in trembling agony. Or, 'exult with shuddering.' But these ideas are nowhere else found combined, and joy seems unsuitable here. See crit. note.

12 Lest he be angry. This is preceded in the received text by 'Kiss the son' (an Aramaic word for 'son' is used). If these words be genuine, they must mean such a kissing as implies submission (something as Luke vii. 37); 'kissed my feet' means 'did homage' in Assyrian inscriptions. Instead of 'Kiss the son,' the Targum and the Septuagint, which agree but rarely, have, 'Take hold of admonition,' or in better English, 'Learn well your lessons' (R. Stanihurst, 1583), which is adopted by the Peshitto (Ambrosian Codex) and the Vulgate. This, however, is no equivalent of the traditional reading, but a marginal gloss upon 'be admonished' (v. 10), which intruded (as glosses have often done) into the text, and which in course of time became corrupted into the present Hebrew reading. It is obvious¹ that the subject of the verb in the clause 'lest he be angry' is Jehovah, who absorbs the attention in this part of the psalm. We must either emend, reading 'Seek ye his face' with Brüll, or something similar, or else suppose that the two doubtful words are a post-Exile (Aramaising) insertion by one who wished to bring out the Messianic reference more distinctly. The former view seems the more probable. It is at any rate very doubtful whether the title 'son of God' was applied to the Messiah in the time of Christ.²—**And ye go to ruin.** Hupfeld, 'and ye go astray as to the way.' The image of the treacherous path seems more prominent here than in i. 6; still Hupfeld's rendering is too weak. Some have thought

¹ This too is implied by the Talmudic interpretation, תורה = בר, *Bammidbar rabba*, 10; cf. *Sanhedrin*, 92 a (Weber, *System*, p. 148).

² See Drummond, *Jewish Messiah*, Bk. ii. chap. x.

(see Rosenmüller) that the way is that which leads to the king, as if the enforced homage came too late, wrath being already kindled. But 'way' means 'fortune,' and 'going astray' means 'being ruined' (see on i. 6).—**Kindleth easily.** Or, 'will soon kindle,' i.e. 'little more is needed for his wrath to burn' (Orelli).

PSALM III.

A MORNING-PRAYER in time of danger, purporting to be spoken by a leader of the church-nation, but apparently meant for liturgical use (*v.* 9). The enemies are evidently heathen (see on *v.* 8). There are four strophes, the first three tetrastichs, the fourth a pentastich. Read this and the next psalm together, and comp. xxvii. 1-6.

- 2 Jehovah, how many are my foes become !
many are they that rise up against me.
- 3 Many are saying of my soul,
'There is no salvation for him in God.'
- 4 But thou, Jehovah, art a shield about me,
my glory, and the lifter up of my head.
- 5 I cry aloud unto Jehovah,
and he answers me from his holy mount.
- 6 I laid me down and slept,
I have awaked, for Jehovah sustains me.
- 7 I am not afraid of the myriads of people
that have arrayed themselves against me round about.
8. Arise, Jehovah ; save me, O my God !
for thou hast smitten all mine enemies upon the cheek-bone,
the teeth of the ungodly hast thou broken.
- 9 Unto Jehovah belongeth salvation ;
thy blessing be upon thy people !

3 **Of my soul**, i.e. of myself as a living, conscious, personal being (see on xlii. 2).—**Salvation.** A distinct word is desirable to express the wonderful deliverances which, as the Israelites and their neighbours¹ felt, God alone can give. 'Salvation,' however, must not be understood in a Christian, theological sense. External deliverances—these were what pious Israelites longed for (so even in li. 14) as 'tokens for good,' involving no doubt the forgiveness of sins, but only as the forgiveness of

an earthly father is betokened by his good gifts to his wilful children. 'God' and 'saviour' or 'deliverer' are in fact synonymous terms ; see cvi. 21, Isa. xliii. 3, 11, xlv. 15, 21. This material sense of 'salvation' is in accordance with the physical meaning of the root of *y'shūāh*, 'spaciousness' (see on iv. 2). 'Deliverance' (as an act) or 'liberty' (as a state ; see l. 23, xci. 16) is the derived sense in Hebrew ; riches, knowledge, and power in Arabic (so in the Korán).

4 **My glory**, i.e. in the fullest

¹ Mesha (inscr., l. 4) says of Kemósh that he 'saved' him.

sense of the word, the source and the preserver of all that in me is glorious, of my personal life (comp. vii. 6), of which many foresee a speedy termination (*v.* 3), and of my personal dignity (see *iv.* 2).

5 I cry, &c. It is my constant experience that Jehovah answers prayer.—**From his holy mount**, i.e. from Mount Zion, the equivalent of heaven as a storehouse of divine powers (see on *lxviii.* 19). Possibly the psalmist is now far from Jerusalem.

6 I might have slept unto

death (*xiii.* 4). Danger converts the most natural processes into proofs of God's 'passing great kindness' (*iv.* 4).

8 Thou hast smitten. Such has been my *repeated* experience. Milton, 'hast smote ere now.'—

The ungodly. Heathen enemies are meant (see on *lxviii.* 3); for no psalmist ever describes his Jewish enemies as 'ungodly' (*r'shā'im*) in the mass, at any rate before the Maccabean period. Comp. *ix.* 5, where 'the nations' and the 'ungodly' are parallel.

PSALM IV.

THIS and the preceding psalm are jewels on one string; that was a morning, this is an evening prayer. Even in expression there are points of contact between them (*cf.* *iii.* 3, *iv.* 7; *iii.* 4, *iv.* 3; *iii.* 6, *iv.* 9). May we not supplement the one psalm from the other? The dangers to which the psalmist and his friends are exposed, are represented in *Ps.* *iv.* as mainly from within, but surely *vv.* 7-9 give vague hints of dangers from without upon which a bright light is reflected from *Ps.* *iii.*

- 2 Answer me when I call, God of my righteousness ;
O my heart's ease in distress, pity me and hear my prayer.
- 3 O sons of men, how long shall my glory be insulted,
in that ye love vanity, and seek after falsehood?
- 4 But see how passing great kindness Jehovah hath shown me ;
Jehovah hears when I call unto him.
- 5 Tremble, and sin no more :
resolve in your heart upon your bed, and be still.
- 6 Offer the right sacrifices,
and put your trust in Jehovah.
- 7 Many are saying, 'O for the sight of good fortune !'
Jehovah, lift thou up the light of thy face upon us.
- 8 Thou hast put more joy into my heart
than when others have their corn and new wine in abundance.
- 9 In peace will I at once lay me down and sleep,
for thou, Jehovah, makest me dwell alone in safety.

2 O God of my righteousness, i.e. thou who declarest my righteousness (see on *vii.* 18) by rewarding me openly. Success viewed as the gift of a righteous judge is itself called 'righteousness' (*cf.* *xxiv.* 5, *Isa.* *liv.* 17, &c.)—**My heart's ease, &c.** Past experi-

ences, the ground of present faith (see on *iii.* 8). For the phraseology, comp. *Isa.* *lx.* 4, 'Thy heart shall throb and be enlarged.' It is more obvious, indeed, though not more admissible, to see in the Hebrew an image from a walker who, after being hemmed in by rocks, is sud-

denly introduced into a broad space (comp. xviii. 19, xxxi. 8, and see notes on iii. 3 *b*, xxvi. 11 *b*, 12). In my version I had an eye to the brevity of the Hebrew; we have, in fact, only half a line to spare! The literal rendering is, 'Thou (who) in a strait hast enlarged (a space) for me.'

3 **O sons of men.** Or, as Delitzsch, 'ye men of high degree' (comp. on lxii. 10); but the antithesis is perhaps not between great men and mean men, but between man and Jehovah. Strengthened by the thought of God, the psalmist can bear these 'blasphemers of dignities' (2 Pet. ii. 10, lit. 'glories').

—**My glory.** Two meanings are open to us, (1) my personal dignity as a king or prophet (comp. on lxii. 5), (2) the God whose service is my glory (comp. on cvi. 20). The former accords with the best interpretation of the next line.—

Ye love vanity and seek after falsehood. Taking these words in connexion with *v. 6 a*, as directed against worldly-mindedness, we might paraphrase with Milton,

How long be thus forborn
Still to love vanity,
To love, to seek, to prize

Things false and vain, and nothing else
but lies?

Another view may be supported by comparing Isa. xxviii. 17 (where Delitzsch thinks 'lie' and 'falsehood' mean breach of faith towards Assyria). The psalmist, like Isaiah (xxx. 12), may perhaps reproach his opponents with relying on a crooked policy rather than on Jehovah, and with forming plans which, like those of 'the nations' in ii. 1, are 'unrealisable' (*riq* is the word in both places). Such plans necessarily involved contempt for the 'glory' of prophets of the noble style, such as Isaiah and (perhaps) our psalmist. Or, taking 'my glory' as a synonym for 'my God' (see above), and remembering that 'to love' and to 'seek after' are used elsewhere in

a religious sense (see xl. 16, lxix. 33, 37), and that 'lying vanities' (*hēbhēl*, not as here *riq*) and 'falsehoods' (xxxii. 7, Am. ii. 4) are synonyms for idol-gods, we might view the passage as a reproof to the heathenish section of the Jewish nation. We might then compare xvi. 4; it is certain that the persons addressed are not hearty worshippers of Jehovah. Still I think the psalmist would in this case have used sterner language; and, on the whole, comparing that striking passage lxii. 5, I would rather explain 'vanity' and 'falsehood' of the calumnies uttered by the opponents of the psalmist (comp. xxxi. 14, Jer. xx. 10); or perhaps 'vanity' may refer to the 'unrealisable' plans which they loved to forge for his destruction.

4 **But see** (or, 'take notice'), as a contrast to your depreciation of my dignity; or, 'then see,' since your passion so blinds you.—

How passing great kindness, &c. Vain is all this hostility, for my life exhibits a series of divine loving-kindnesses. No common phrase this. David, we are told, was anxious to find out members of Saul's family, 'that I may show the kindness of God unto him' (2 Sam. ix. 3); the psalmist was now brought as low as the family of Saul in the hour of David's success. He needed a 'passing great' or 'singular' (not 'marvellous') exhibition of God's dearest quality—'lovingkindness'; compare similar expressions in xvii. 7, xxxi. 22. To this manysided conception we shall have occasion to return. 'Lovingkindness' (*khēsedh*, usually *ἐλεος* in Sept.) means first of all the covenant-love of Jehovah to those who know and serve Him; next, the covenant-love of a servant of Jehovah to his God; next, the love of Jehovah's fellow-servants among themselves. We shall do well to begin with fixing in our minds this primal truth of the religion of the Psalms—that

¹ The traditional reading is, 'That Jehovah hath set apart a loving (i.e. pious) one for himself.' Against this see crit. note.

God is not merely man's Baal or lord, but the head of a community, bound together by mutual love. See further on xii. 2, xvi. 10, xviii. 26, xxxvi. 8-11, l. 5, and my *Hosea* (1884), pp. 27-30.

5 **Tremble**, &c. (see *v.* 6 *b*, and comp. xl. 4, 'that many should see it, and fear, and put their trust in Jehovah'). He would have them shaken out of their proud security (comp. Isa. xxxii. 11, Heb.) by the sight of the favour which he enjoys; for this favour implies Jehovah's disfavour for His servant's enemies. This view follows the Targum. The Septuagint has, for 'Tremble,' 'Be ye angry;' i.e. 'Be angry, if you will, but let it be in silence; let your factious opposition have an end.' But how unlike the religion of the psalmists, to allow a lower standard to others than to oneself, and to sanction the dumb brooding of unholiness! See *v.* 10.—**Resolve in your heart**. Literally, 'say in your heart.' The heart is the seat, not only of the desires and emotions, but also of the conscience and the intellect. The psalmist appeals, in these words, to the conscience and reason of his hearers. He would have them collect their thoughts, and 'say in their heart' something like those words of Isaiah, 'Come ye, and let us walk in the light of Jehovah' (comp. *v.* 7). The unexampled omission of the words to be inwardly said constitutes the phrase one of those enigmas by which the psalmists from time to time love to stimulate the interest of their readers. 'Heart-speeches' (if the word may be coined) are among the characteristics of the proud and self-confident (see x. 6, 11, 13, xiv. 1, xxxv. 25). But such 'communing' is not 'for peace;' 'they frame deceitful plots against the quiet in the land' (xxxv. 20). Especially at night, when God 'giveth his beloved sleep' or thoughts still sweeter than sleep (cxxxix. 18, cxlix. 5), these men, we are told, are as busy as ever 'devising mischief upon their beds' (xxxvi. 4).

But now the psalmist hopes that his proud opponents will change their custom. There are heart-speeches of piety as well as of pride. They may be expressed in the form of prayer (see I Sam. i. 13), or in that of holy resolution (xxvii. 8). The latter seems the most appropriate here as a preparation for *v.* 5. Observe the mildness of the psalmist's reproof; other poets did not copy him in this. The calm of evening broods over his gentle thoughts.—**Be still**. Or, 'be silent;' this narrower sense is suggested by the context. A fatal fluency of speech was one characteristic of the 'ungodly' in Israel (*v.* 10, lix. 22).

6 True piety is both inward and outward. Inwardly it is trust; outwardly it is expressed in **right sacrifices**, those which are offered from right motives, as opposed to 'false (or, hypocritical) offerings' (Isa. i. 13). So li. 19, Deut. xxxiii. 19.

7 **Lift thou up**, &c. An image for the restoration of the divine favour, says one. A poet of the school of Dante saw deeper,—

Tu sei, Signor, la luce chiara e pura,
La qual, levando su senza dimora,
Farà la rocca di Sion sicura.

See further on xvii. 15, and comp. Num. vi. 25, 26 (of which some unnecessarily consider our passage to be an echo).—**Upon us**. It is a national psalm, therefore, even though the speaker may not here be the personified Israel.

8 The prayer of faith has been answered (cf. xxxvi. 9, 10). From the contrast in this verse, we may assume that the persons spoken of had heathenish tendencies. The 'good fortune' they desired consisted in mere material blessings, which followed as a matter of course on the due worship of the gods of the soil. To the prophets and psalmists, these same gifts were conditional on the moral obedience of the worshippers (comp. Deut. xxviii. 1-14), and the confirmed believer could, if called upon, dispense

with them (Hab. iii. 17, 18). The exuberant joy of harvest and vintage is alluded to in Isa. ix. 3, Hos. ix. 1 (comp. vii. 14).

9 Comp. xvi. 9 *b*. **At once.** No tossing before slumber comes. —**Alone**, i.e. without friends or allies; comp. Deut. xxxiii. 28, Num. xxiii. 9, Mic. vii. 14, Jer. xlix. 31.

PSALM V.

ANOTHER morning-prayer (*v.* 4), designed, like Ps. iii., for the temple-service (*v.* 8). The central petition is in *v.* 9; the psalmist fears by any lapse into sin to 'give occasion to the enemy to blaspheme.' Comp. this psalm therefore with xxvi. and xxviii., the leading petitions of which are similar.

- 2 Give ear unto my words, Jehovah,
understand my murmuring.
- 3 Listen to the sound of my crying, my King and my God,
for unto thee do I make my prayer.
- 4 Jehovah, in the morning dost thou hear my voice ;
in the morning do I order (my sacrifice) for thee, and look out.
- 5 For thou art not a God that has pleasure in wickedness,
evil cannot be a guest of thine :
- 6 Boasters cannot stand up before thine eyes,
thou hatest all them that work naughtiness :
- 7 Thou destroyest them that speak lies ;
the man of blood and of deceit Jehovah abhors.
- 8 But I, because of thine abundant kindness, can enter thy house,
worshipping toward thy holy palace in the fear of thee.
- 9 Jehovah, lead me in thy righteousness, because of my keen-eyed
enemies ;
make thy way even before my face.
- 10 For there is no sincerity in their mouth,
their inward part is engulfing ruin ;
an open grave is their throat,
though they make smooth their tougue.
- 11 Declare them guilty, O God,
let them fall by their own plots ;
for their manifold transgressions thrust them down,
for they have rebelled against thee :
- 12 So shall all that take refuge in thee be glad,
and ring out their joy for ever ;
and if thou protect them, in thee shall they triumph
who love thy name.
- 13 For thou, Jehovah, givest thy blessing to the righteous ;
with favour, as with a buckler, surroundest thou him.

2 **My murmuring**, which none but God can interpret.

4 **Order (my sacrifice)**. Prayer and praise, being 'mediative' (see on xlii. 9c), belong to the class of sacrifices (*πνευματικὰ θυσίαι*, 1 Pet. ii. 5). The same conception of prayer as in cxli. 2; cf. cvii. 22, Hos. xiv. 3. Milton,

I 'th' morning I to thee with choice
Will rank my prayers.

Others explain, 'will I set forth (my cause);' cf. Job xlii. 18, xxiii. 4.

—**Look out**, viz. unto Jehovah (Mic. vii. 7) for an answer, or, more poetically, for the angel of His lovingkindness (xlii. 9). 'Look up' (A. V.) in Bishop Alexander's paraphrase is fine, but 'look out' is truer to the feelings of the age; Jehovah is not 'far above,' but waiting in His 'holy of holies' (see on v. 7) to send help.

5 **Cannot be a guest of thine**, i.e. cannot enjoy thy hospitable and protecting care. See on xv. 1.

6 **Boasters** (*hōlālīm*). The root expresses a loud, noisy, self-important demeanour. What ideas are connected with this will be seen from lxiii. 3, 8, 9. *Korán*, lvii. 23, is also instructive. The line of thought there is, Be neither distressed at poverty, nor exultant at riches; for God appoints this difference, and 'God loveth not the presumptuous, the boaster.'—**Vaughtiness**, that which is morally worthless.

7 A contrast to be explained thus. Since 'evil cannot be a guest of thine' (v. 5), the only real congregation is that of believers; all others do but 'trample God's courts' (Isa. i. 12). All others will sooner or later perish; but Jehovah's guests shall 'dwell in His house unto length of days' (xxiii. 6).

8 **I . . . can enter**, &c. I, who

am conscious of being a *khātsīdh* (one who is dutefully loving to God and man), can be assured of Jehovah's *khesedh* or covenant-love, and encompassed and enabled by that love, can enter His house.¹ Comp., with Driver, Isa. xxvi. 13, 'only through thee can we celebrate thy name.'

—**Can worship**. 'To worship' in Hebrew is properly 'to prostrate oneself.' So in Arabic *mesjid* 'a mosque' (Dante's *meschita*) is strictly 'a place of bowing the head.'

—**Toward thy holy palace**, i.e., perhaps, towards the Holy of holies (comp. xxviii. 2), though in the description of the Solomonian temple 'palace' (*hēkāl*; see crit. note) is the word for the Holy place, the 'nave,' one might say, as opposed to the 'chancel' (1 Kings vi. 5, 17, vii. 50). See further on xxviii. 2.

9 Encouraged by the thought of his privilege, the psalmist now offers his prayer. **Lead me in thy righteousness**, i.e. either 'lead me in thy quality of a righteous God' (vii. 10), or, in the path of righteousness (Prov. viii. 20, Heb.) The former explanation seems the safer. The second line explains the first. A fall, i.e. a misfortune, would cause my enemies to rejoice (xxxv. 15), and to imagine that I had been guilty of some great sin.—**Make thy way even**, i.e. probably, free from misfortune; see on xxvi. 12. The life of a saint is finely described as God's way (comp. xvii. 5), because God alone has the plan or 'counsel' of it (lxiii. 24, xvi. 7).

10 **Engulfing ruin**. The root-meaning (see crit. note) may here have been present to the writer's mind (comp. on 'perishes,' i. 6), though the secondary sense, 'destruction' (see xxxviii. 13, lii. 4, lv. 12, lvii. 2, xci. 3, xciv. 20) is evidently more prominent. The plural

¹ 'House' (*bayith*) might conceivably mean the so-called Tabernacle, just as *ba'it* in Arabic, according to the Arabic lexicons, may be used of a tent; it does indeed mean this in Josh. vi. 24, 2 Sam. xii. 20. But I doubt if 'palace' (*hēkāl*) could be so used. It would sound almost ironical to call the temporary tent in which (partly, perhaps, for want of space in the citadel of Jebus) David deposited the Ark a 'great house' (see crit. note). Hengstenberg maintains that the Tabernacle is called *hēkāl* in 1 Sam. i. 9, iii. 3, but few will now deny that the *hēkāl*, or divine palace, referred to was the Temple of Shiloh, as to which see note on lxxviii. 60.

(*havvōth*) indicates the manifoldness and intensity of the 'ruin.'

11 Declare them guilty. Sept. *κρίνον αὐτοῦς*. Misfortune was regarded as declarative of God's anger against sin (see xxxiv. 22); this idea was stamped as deeply on the language (see on xxxi. 11) as on the theology of Israel. What 'searchings of heart' followed from it, the Book of Job and the cognate psalms testify.

12 Ring out their joy. This is a peculiar word used with delicate tact in Biblical Hebrew, and much more widely in the Targum on the Psalms (see crit. note). It properly means a shrill, piercing cry, expressive of emotional excite-

ment, such as an Eastern scruples not to use in prayer (1 Kings viii. 28, Jer. xiv. 12, Lam. ii. 19, Ps. xviii. 1, &c.), but which is also equally adapted for rejoicing and for lamentation (see my note on Isa. xliii. 14). More in crit. note.

13 As with a buckler. It is the shield of largest size which is meant (1 Sam. xvii. 7). Naturally, for 'the righteous' is collective; in short, it is a term like *Jeshurun* for the ideal Israel. We may then compare Tasso's lines of liquid harmony,

Si vedea fiammeggiar fra gli altri arnesi
Scudo di lucidissimo diamante
Grande che può coprir genti e paesi.

Gerusalemme Liberata, c. vii. st. 81.

PSALM VI.

A RECORD of still deeper depression (cf. Ps. xxxviii.) Mental produces bodily suffering. Persecution is at its height; by the 'workers of wickedness' (*v.* 9) the psalmist means irreligious oppressors (xiv. 4). Faith restores his wonted elasticity. The speaker is either the pious Israelite personified, or a representative righteous man who feels the sins and sufferings of his people as his own (see on *v.* 2).

- 2 Jehovah, do not in thine anger reprove me,
neither in thy wrath correct me.
- 3 Have pity upon me, Jehovah, for I am languishing;
neal me, Jehovah, for my bones are confounded.
- 4 My soul also is confounded exceedingly;
but thou, Jehovah, how long?
- 5 Return, Jehovah, deliver my soul,
save me, for thy lovingkindness' sake.
- 6 For in Death there is no mention of thee,
in Sheól who will give thee thanks?
- 7 I am wearied with my groaning,
every night make I my bed to swim,
I melt away my couch with my tears.
- 8 Mine eye has fallen in from vexation,
it has grown old with the insulting of my foes.
- 9 Away from me, all ye that work wickedness,
for Jehovah has heard my loud weeping.
- 10 Jehovah has heard my supplication,
Jehovah will receive my prayer.

11 Ashamed and sore confounded be all mine enemies,
let them turn back with shame suddenly!

2 The 'whispered prayer' (Isa. xxvi. 16) of penitent Israel under a sense of God's anger. **Not in thine anger**, 'but with mildness and with perfect love,' as the supposed Dante paraphrases. Cf. xxxviii. 2, and the original of both passages—Jer. x. 23, 'Jehovah, correct me, but according to justice; not in thine anger, lest thou make me small.' Here, as in the whole section (Jer. x. 17-25), the speaker is, not Jeremiah as an individual, but as a prophet who loses himself in the people which he represents. Hence he says, 'lest thou make me small,' i.e. 'lest I (Israel) survive as the mere shadow of my former self.' See above, and cf. on *v.* 6.

3 **Heal me.** The psalmist thinks partly of his own sufferings as a persecuted Israelite, but still more of those of the nation (see on xxx. 3) with which he identifies himself. 'Sickness' is a figure of various application. As applied to the pious kernel of Israel, it means the danger in which it was of being extinguished by persecution. But this application is not to exclude a personal reference to the agonising anxiety of individuals, including the writer, for their own safety.—**My bones.** The Hebrew conceives of physical and spiritual life as existing in one undivided personality, while the Aryan nations are dualistic. Hence the bones sometimes (as here) represent the whole body, and sometimes even the whole nature of man. See, e.g., xxxi. 11, xxxii. 3, xxxv. 10, xxxviii. 4, li. 10, and compare the use of *'eṣem*, Gen. vii. 13, &c., for the essence or body of a thing (*res ipsa*).

6 **For in Death**, &c. Observe the writer's strong fear of death. Though most of all anxious probably for the future of his nation (see on xxx. 4, 10, lxxxviii. 4-6), he retains his hopes and fears as an

individual; the psalm of Hezekiah shows (Isa. xxxviii. 18) how terrible to a believer was the cessation in Sheól of the life of prayer and praise. This terribleness was, however, one element in the training of the Jews for a final 'illumination' of 'life and immortality' (2 Tim. i. 10).—**Death**, not the process or state of death, but another name for Sheól (as ix. 13, xxii. 16, lxxviii. 20, lxxxix. 49, cvii. 18); comp. Rev. i. 18, vi. 8, xx. 13, 14.—**Sheól**, i. 2, the underworld, the land of the Refaim (lxxxviii. 11) or shades. In the Sept. and in the N.T. the Hebrew Sheól is presented as Hades, a rendering which was adopted in the Parchment Library Psalms, and involves an anachronism far more innocent than that of using the Teutonic 'hell.' The Assyrian equivalent of Sheól is traced by some in *šū'ālu* = 'place of decision:' see Friedr. Delitzsch, *Prolegomena*, p. 109; Jeremias, *Die bab.-ass. Vorstellungen* (1887), pp. 62, 109.

7 The first clause is taken from Jer. xlv. 3. Comp. lxix. 4.

8 The first clause recurs with the slightest variation in xxxi. 10 (where the speaker is the nation). **With the insulting of.** The received text gives, weakly, 'because of all.' See crit. note.

9 A strange but noble transition! Sudden spiritual changes, then, *are* possible. God has 'prepared a table before him in the presence of his enemies' (xxiii. 5, A.V.) He has an oracle within his heart which tells him that his prayer has been heard, and he humbly adds his own inference (not the 'subjective tense') that God will 'receive' it graciously, i.e. grant his petition (comp. 1 John v. 15). When this is realised, his enemies will be as much 'confounded' as he himself was (*v.* 4), labouring under the consciousness of God's wrath.

PSALM VII.

'A STORM of the most varied thoughts, fears, and hopes, rightly called in the heading a dithyramb,' says Ewald; and Ainsworth long before (1627) had spoken of its 'sundry variable and wandering verses.'¹ Not only by the variety but by the energy of its style the psalm contrasts with the two which precede it. A national psalm it is, beyond doubt. Righteous Israel (Jeshurun) is the speaker. Who else can utter the solemn declaration of innocence in *v.* 9 (see note)?

- 2 Jehovah my God, in thee have I taken refuge ;
save me from all my pursuers, and deliver me :
- 3 Lest he tear my soul as a lion,
when there is none to rescue, and none to deliver.
- 4 Jehovah my God, if I have done this,
if there be iniquity in my hands,
- 5 If I have wrought evil unto him that was at peace with me,
or oppressed him that was my foe for nothing,
- 6 Let the enemy pursue my soul, and overtake it,
yea, let him trample my life to the earth,
and lay my glory in the dust.
- 7 Arise, Jehovah, in thine anger,
lift thyself up at the fury of my foes,
yea, arouse thyself to meet me—
a judgment hast thou (already) appointed ;
- 8 Yea, let the assemblage of the peoples come about thee,
and sit thou above them on the high mount.
- 9 Jehovah judges the peoples ;
right me, Jehovah, according to mine innocence
and according to mine inward integrity.
- 10 O that the wickedness of the ungodly might come to an end,
and that thou wouldest establish the innocent,
thou trier of the hearts and reins, thou righteous Elohim !
- 11 My shield over me is Elohim,
the saviour of the upright in heart,
- 12 Elohim, a righteous judge,
and a God who is wrathful every day.
- 13 If any do not turn, he whets his sword ;
he has bent his bow and made it ready,
- 14 And has aimed at the man the weapons of death,
setting his arrows aflame.

¹ This assumes a derivation from *shāgāh* 'to wander.' Zimmern (*Babylonische Busspsalmen*, p. 1) compares Bab. *šigu*, the technical term for a class of *penitential* hymns, from the emotional excitement which characterises them.

- 15 Behold, he travails with wickedness ;
 he both conceives mischief and brings forth a lie.
 16 A pit has he dug and hollowed it out,
 and he will tumble into the (very) pitfall he made.
 17 His mischief shall return upon his own head,
 upon the crown of his own head shall his violence descend
 18 I will thank Jehovah according to his righteousness,
 and make melody unto the name of Jehovah most high.

3 **Tear my soul.** Comp. 'his soul went into the iron' (cv. 18).

5 **If I have wrought evil, &c.** So (after Targ.) Ewald, Hupfeld, Riehm, Delitzsch. Less naturally, Dathé, Olshausen, Böttcher, 'If I have done evil to him that recompensed evil to me,' taking *gāmal* in a pregnant sense (see on xiii. 6). Against this see Rödiger in Gesenius' *Thesaurus*, s.v. **אָפּוּסָה**.—**Or oppressed, &c.** The text, as rendered by Ewald and most critics, has 'and delivered, &c.,' which De Witt paraphrases into 'I, that would rescue my causeless foe.' But see crit. note.

6 **Pursue my soul,** as if a fugitive bird (xi. 1).—**My glory** not in the sense of iv. 3, but = 'my soul' (xvi. 9, xxx. 13, lvii. 9, cviii. 2, Gen. xlix. 6). In spite of its obscurity to the English reader, it is important to keep the literal rendering. The phrase illustrates and is illustrated by 'my only one' (= my dear life), even though it be only different in degree of excellence (not in kind) from the 'soul' of any other kind of animals (see on xlix. 13, 21). How natural it would be to take one step in advance and infer the happy immortality of this 'soul,' like Macbeth in the phrase 'my eternal jewel'! This step was not with full consciousness taken by the early psalmists, but there seems to have been an intuitional belief in the higher truth (see on xvi. 9-11, lxxiii. 25, 26), which was religiously as precious as the more developed creed of the Psalter of Solomon.

7 **A judgment** (in my favour) **hast thou already appointed.** We should have expected the imperative (cf. lxxviii. 29) ; the perfect

is best explained (as xxii. 22) by a sudden burst of heaven-storming faith. 'Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?' Ewald and Driver, however, take this line, not as a coordinate but as a circumstantial clause, 'having commanded judgment.'

8 **The assemblage of the peoples,** viz. of the nations of the world whom Jehovah is about to judge, including Israel. Comp. Isa. iii. 13, 14, but *not* Ps. l. 1 (where all nations are merely summoned to act as witnesses).—**And sit thou above them** (lit. 'it'), &c. The received text was rendered in *P. L.* psalms, 'And return thou over it unto the high heaven.' The difference of readings is but small, and the traditional text is somewhat favoured by the consideration that 'the height' is very frequently (see on xviii. 17) used as a synonym for 'heaven.' (Some say that when used absolutely it always means 'heaven ;' but see on lxxviii. 19.) But how unlikely that in the first half of v. 7 the scene of the judgment should be described only in order that in the second half the judge should return to his heavenly palace! Observe too that in v. 9 the sentence is still waiting to be pronounced ; how can the psalmist pray to be righted if Jehovah has already returned to his holy habitation? Calvin, indeed, supposes that 'return' is spoken with reference to Jehovah's previous inactivity, and means 'Resume thy judicial functions.' So too Hupfeld, but against the analogy of passages like xxi. 14. Hence the corrected reading and rendering given above (on which see crit.

note). 'The height' is, here, not 'the holy mount of Heav'n's high-seated top' (*Paradise Lost*, vii. 584-5), but Mount Zion (see on lxviii. 18). This view alone suits the context. The mention of the surrounding 'assemblage' of itself shows that the throne is an earthly one, just as the mention of judgment shows that not 'returning'—a phrase suggestive of repose—but 'taking one's seat' is the appropriate verb in this clause. (Clericus explains, 'conscendere solium, juris dicendi causâ').

9 Observe the significant parallelism, 'Jehovah judges the peoples; (therefore) right *me* (the people of Israel).' But from what point of view does the speaker so confidently lay claim to innocence? From the point of view of general obedience to the law, i.e. presumably that of Deuteronomy (lately promulgated?) Comp. 2 Kings xxiii. 25, 'And like unto him (Josiah) was there no king before him that turned to Jehovah, . . . according to all the law of Moses.' At a somewhat later time a prophet, though almost bound to take a severe view of the people, says that the ungodly (Chaldæan) swallows up one who is more righteous than he (Hab. i. 13). The psalmist's view may seem too rose-coloured, but probably he fairly represents the feelings of most of the best men respecting Judah-Israel. It is easy to conceive that humility became a virtue of individuals before it characterised the nation. Comp. on xliv. 18-22.

10 Comp. Hab. i. 4, 'Therefore law is benumbed, and judgment doth never go forth; for the ungodly compasseth the righteous,' &c.—**Thou trier**, &c. A Jeremian expression (see above); comp. xvii. 3, xxvi. 2. The implied antithesis is brought out in I Sam. xvi. 7. Note the effective repetition of 'righteous' at the end (in Heb.) of lines 2 and 4, a mere trifle, but it shows how a passion for righteousness dominates the author.

11 **My shield over me is God.**

Comp. Ps. iii. 4. If, however, we keep the traditional text ('My shield is upon God'), we must give 'shield' the secondary meaning of 'defence'; 'shade' is thus used for 'protection' in cxxi. 5. 'Upon God' will then mean 'resting (as an obligation) upon God'; comp. lxii. 8, 'On God (rests) my salvation.' But the expression is doubly difficult, and the parallel line suggests that 'God' is the subject to which 'the saviour,' &c., is in apposition.—**The upright in heart.** A plural in apposition to the singular in line 1, thus suggesting that the speaker is the nation (Yeshurun 'the Upright One').

13 **If any do not turn.** Since there is no fresh subject to the verb, some (e.g. Ewald) think that 'God' must be understood, and render 'Surely he will again whet his sword.' But the poet had probably a rhythmical reason for not naming the subject. The context, he knew, would forbid the assignment of such fatal weapons to any but God. 'Turn'=repent. God's threatenings (v. 12) precede his judgments, and ought to lead men to repentance. Julius Hammer paraphrases,

Wer trotz'ig nicht auf seine Huld verzichtet,
Hört täglich, wenn er droht, bevor er richtet.

—**Whets . . . has bent.** The arms of Jehovah, from Deut. xxxii. 41, 42. Notice the verbal forms in the Hebrew. The one suggests that the punishment is prepared gradually; the other, that at any moment the preparation may be finished, so that then the punishment will issue forth as a shaft from the bow.

14-16 The punishment of the wicked man is described in two ways, first as 'the vengeance of (God's) eternal fire' (hence the flaming arrows of v. 14; cf. xviii. 15), sometimes as developing out of his own sin. So Isa. xxxiii. 11, 'your own blast is fire which shall devour you'; v. 14, 'who can tarry with (God's) perpetual burnings?' St. Augustine, *Hom. ad loc.*, overlooks this double presentation. Comp.

also Isa. xxvi. 18, lix. 4, and especially Job xv. 35.

18 **According to his righteousness.** 'Righteousness' has a peculiar sense in the Old Testament. Its root-meaning is firmness or tightness; hence it is the quality which leads one to adhere to a fixed rule of conduct. God's rule is his covenant; hence righteousness shows itself in all such acts as tend to the full realising of the covenant with Israel (comp. xi. 7).—**Jehovah most high.** Strictly, Yahvè Elyōn; comp. Elohim Elyōn, lvii. 3. In Gen. xiv. 19 we read of a Canaanitish king, named Melchizedek, who was a priest of El Elyōn or 'God Supreme' (a name belonging originally to the Sky-god); cf. Eliun in Philo of Byblus *ap.* Euseb. *Præp. Evang.*, i. 10, 11, &c. The psalmist, like Abram, claims for his uniquely great God Jehovah a right to this lofty title. But supremacy may have two meanings. In the stage of a qualified monotheism, the Most High or Supreme God will derive His title from His vast superiority to the other superhuman beings called Elohim (cf. lxxxii. 6). In the stage of a more nearly complete monotheism, the same title Elyōn will express the infinite distance between the holy God and all created things, the universality and absoluteness of His rule (see on lxxxiii. 19, xci. 1). Being equally appropriate to both these

stages (which may of course be represented by different persons contemporaneously), and being attested by traditions of probable antiquity, the name Elyōn is not to be taken (as by Geiger¹) as a sure sign wherever it occurs of post-Exile date. We cannot, e.g., say that our psalm *must* be post-Exile, because the name Elyōn occurs in it. And yet a subsidiary argument can be based upon the title, because it is certain that post-Exile writers were specially fond of using it (see especially Daniel and the Wisdom of Sirach); and it is more than probable that some at least of the 19 psalms in which it occurs are of post-Exile date. The name (El Elyōn or Elyōn) was in existence earlier, just as El Shaddai or Shaddai existed long before the Book of Job; but probably from its Phœnician associations it was discountenanced by the pre-Exile prophets. Some reader may object here, But does not the Book of Isaiah contain the word Elyōn as a divine title? Yes; in a passage known to be due to a later hand (Isa. xiv. 14). Elyōn was not, indeed, freshly minted in Babylon, but it was the widening influence of their foreign sojourn which opened the eyes of the Jews to the usefulness of this ancient word-symbol. Comp. Plumptre, *Biblical Studies*, pp. 17-36.

PSALM VIII.

EWALD forms a noble trilogy by grouping Pss. xxix., xix. 1-7, and viii. —a storm-piece, a day-piece, and a night-piece. (I should have liked to add Ps. xciii. for a sea-piece.) In this psalm the lessons of nature are specially prominent. The poet (who is scarcely either a shepherd-boy or a warrior-king) has a deep feeling for Earth's beauties, but he knows something more glorious even than the sky of an Oriental night. Somewhat as St. Paul in 1 Cor. xv. 41 the glories of the firmament do but suggest a 'glory which excelleth.' 'High above the heavens' is Jehovah's 'majesty.' A modern might infer from this that God cared not for the populations of so small a planet as the earth; the psalmist however reflects that, since He *does* care for earth, His glory is enhanced by earth's relative insignificance. And he cares for earth by appointing man as his

¹ 'Offenbar aus Babylonien mitgebracht,' says Geiger in his latest volume (*Lectures*). Comp. his *Urschrift* (1857), p. 33.

viceroys. Man, in short, is idealised ; for (to apply the words of Heb. ii. 8) 'we see not yet all things made subject to him.' How natural it was, and (as Dr. Westcott has shown¹) how natural it is, to apply this psalm to Christ, the 'Son of man' ! But there is an application still nearer to the letter of the text, viz. to regenerate humanity (which St. Paul would call 'the body of Christ'). The psalm is virtually a prophecy of the glorification of the race (comp. 2 Pet. i. 4). Many as are the jealous and revengeful enemies of the upward-striving portion of the race, there is a power ordained of God which shames their futile efforts, and those who wield it are simple-minded, childlike, praiseful believers.

The psalmist knows nothing of the watchwords of philosophic theology. He believes in a divine Creator and Governor, who lavishes his care even on the world of men. He believes too in man, and does not depress man by telling him that he is 'a worm' compared with the 'armies' of the sky (Bildad in Job xxv.), or, as Shelley puts it, 'the glory and the burden of the earth.' It is more unmingledly exhilarating even than Pss. ciii., civ.

The divisions of the psalm are not perfectly clear, except indeed the first (after v. 3). Delitzsch brings v. 6 into connexion with v. 5, and divides after it. But (1) v. 7 is logically as closely connected with v. 6 as v. 6 is with v. 5, and (2) the tone of vv. 6, 7 is different from that of v. 5—humility has given place to pride in divinely given privileges. It is best to make four stanzas or strophes, the first and fourth of which have six lines, the second and third four. The refrain begins the first and ends the last strophe, 'enclosing as it were the whole psalm.'²

- 2 Jehovah our Lord,
how glorious is thy name in all the earth !
whose majesty is raised above the heavens.
- 3 With the mouth of little children and sucklings hast thou
founded a stronghold
because of thy foes,
to still the enemy and the revengeful.
- 4 When I behold thy heavens, the work of thy fingers,
the moon and the stars, which thou didst establish,
- 5 What is mortal man, that thou art mindful of him,
and the son of the earth-born, that thou visitest him ?
- 6 Yea, thou madest him scarce less than gods,
and didst crown him with honour and with state ;
- 7 (And) madest him to rule over the works of thy hands,—
all things hast thou put under his feet,
- 8 Sheep and oxen, all of them,
moreover the beasts of the plain,
- 9 The fowl of the heaven, and the fish of the sea,
that which traverses the paths of the seas.
- 10 Jehovah our Lord,
how glorious is thy name in all the earth !

¹ *Christus Consummator*, ii.

² Prof. Briggs (*Presbyterian Rev.*, July 1885), who divides the psalm into two strophes of eight lines each.

2 **Our Lord.** The psalmist is here man's spokesman, not Israel's.

—**How glorious**, or, how magnificent (Jerome, 'quam grande'). *Adār* and *kābōd* both express the idea of the divine glory, the one as swelling amplitude, the other as massiveness. The former is the word here; there is no better commentary on it than xciii. 4 (see note).—**Thy name**, i.e. thyself in thy self-revealing aspect (see on xx. 1), without assuming a revelation as full as in Ex. xxxiv. 5-7.—**Whose majesty**, &c. The 'majesty' is that with which Jehovah is 'clothed' (civ. 1, *hōd* as here), i.e. the essential light which preceded the heavens (see Gen. i.) If (see crit. note) we adhere to the received text, rendering this, 'whose majesty doth extend over the heavens,' we may perhaps see an allusion to xix. 1; comp. cxlviii. 13. If, however, we follow Sept. as above (see crit. note), this passage goes beyond xix. 1, cxlviii. 13 in its recognition of the divine transcendence (cf. lvii. 5, 11, cxiii. 4). At any rate, the thought in this third line is a subordinate one; comp. v. 10.

3 **With the mouth of children**, &c. One of the psalmist's riddles, and not to be interpreted prosaically (as by Hitzig) of some particular event, when the crying of children excited a feeling of humanity in the foe. I suppose the Children's Crusade would be based on this text. The children and sucklings, however, are poor and humble believers (comp. Matt. xi. 25). Jehovah 'inhabits the praises of Israel,' whose 'soul is like a weaned child' (cxxx. 2). These praises are Israel's stronghold; Nehemiah says the same thing of 'the joy which is in Jehovah,' Neh. viii. 10. And such bulwarks as these are powerful enough to still the fury of the fiercest enemy. ('To still' seems better than De Witt's 'to silence,' which implies that the fury was confined to threats).—**The enemy and the revengeful**,

i.e. the revengeful enemy. The only nationalistic touch in the psalm; for xlv. 17 proves that the reference is to the enemies of Israel.

4 Why is not the sun mentioned? Because 'the moon and the stars' of an Eastern sky give a deeper notion of infinity. Ewald, however, thinks that a new-moon or full-moon festival suggested the poem, and consequently the form of expression here used.¹—**Thy heavens**. So civ. 5 (with a different nuance).

5 Comp. cxlv. 3, and Job's despairing 'parody' in Job vii. 17, 18. **What is mortal man** . . . Man is too small to be cared for, and yet, wondrous goodness! he *is* cared for; 'so thou madest him,' &c. The renderings 'mortal man,' 'son of the earth-born,' are to suggest the meaning which a Hebrew reader would attach to 'enōsh' and 'ben 'ādām'. Such plays upon words seem almost instinctive with early writers. De Witt, for a similar reason, gives 'a mortal' and 'a son of Adam.' But there is no more an allusion here to Adam than in Job's 'born of a woman' to Eve.—**Visitest him**. See on xxxiii. 18. 'Visitation' is the Hebrew equivalent for 'special providence' (Job x. 12). Cf. James i. 27, 'to visit (i.e. to relieve) the fatherless.'

6 (See introd.) **Scarce to be less than gods**. Milton's rendering. Comp. Gen. i. 27, 'in the image of Elohim (superhuman beings, gods) created he him.' The R.V.'s rendering, 'than God' (Ewald in his *Psalms*, Hitzig, Delitzsch), seems to me less probable, because God to our psalmist is Jehovah, and besides is directly addressed in this very clause. Ewald's later rendering,² 'than (high) angels,' limits the sense too much. (So Sept.) To the Hebrew consciousness there was no unseemliness in calling the heavenly beings 'sons of Elohim' or even 'Elohim' (see on xxix. 1), not because they were the 'mere interpreters and executors of the divine

¹ *Die Lehre der Bibel von Gott*, iii. 2, p. 100, n. 1.

² *Ibid.* n. 2.

will' (Ewald), but because Jehovah and those who composed His court belonged to the same class of super-human beings (*'elōhīm*). The rendering 'than angels' seems also to involve some disparagement of human nature. Dante, that great painter of angels, after quoting this passage, makes bold to say that in virtue of its manifoldness the noble human character surpasses the angelic nature (*Convito*, iv. 19). The Septuagint translators, however, did but satisfy a craving of their times. Hermann Schultz has shown in detail how much the belief in angels increased in definiteness after the Return from Exile, especially in the period of the Apocrypha.¹ [For Sept. rendering, comp. xcvi. 7, cxxxvii. 1, Isa. ix. 5, Job xx. 15. In the two latter passages ἄγγελος = 'el.]—**And didst crown him . . .** The first part of this verse referred to man's creation 'in the image of *'elōhīm*' (Gen. i. 27); the second

describes his participation, in virtue of his almost divine nature, in the glory of the divine sovereignty. 'Honour' (*kābōd*) and 'state' (*hādār*)—Milton's words—are both ascribed elsewhere to Jehovah (e.g. xxix. 1, 4, civ. 1, cxlv. 5).

7 Put under his feet. Comp. the 'have dominion over' (rather, 'tread down' or 'subdue') of Gen. i. 26, 28.

8 Prof. Legge well expresses the antithesis—

The sheep and oxen, creatures mild,
Beasts of the field, untam'd and wild.

9 That which traverses, &c. Milton, with an added grace of Homeric reminiscence,

. . . fish that through the wet
Sea-paths in shoals do slide . . .

But he forgets that there are other sea-dwellers (cf. Gen. i. 21). The poem of creation is now complete, and we ought not to find the closing refrain too sudden.

PSALM IX.

THIS and the next psalm originally formed but one, but such changes have been introduced that it is better to retain the division into two parts. The original psalm was alphabetic [see on Ps. xxv.], i.e. it consisted of twenty-two pairs of verses, beginning with the letters of the alphabet in succession.² So the P. L. edition briefly summed up results with which most scholars would agree. These results indeed are the development of the conclusion arrived at long since by the Septuagint translator, who makes no division between ix. 21 and x. 1. But the development involved a correction. Ten verses of Ps. x. (*vv.* 2–11) differ so much from the surrounding context, partly in roughness of style, partly in peculiarity of contents, that we can hardly believe them to belong to the same psalm. On examining them closer, we find that they also differ from the context in that they offer no trace of acrostic or alphabetic arrangement; x. 1 begins with Lamed; and x. 12 with Kof, but the six intermediate letters are unrepresented. Is it not probable, then, that the nine² verses which now fill up the interval between *v.* 2 and *v.* 12 are the substitutes for six pairs of distichs, each beginning with one of those six letters? An object for the substitution can be traced, viz. to produce a second psalm for a time of still more keenly felt oppression, in which Israelites and not foreigners were the guilty agents, leaving the first half of the original psalm, with a concluding quatrain due to the editor, to stand by itself as a monument of an earlier period.

Two questions may fitly be asked and answered here. 1, 'Why may

¹ *Alttestamentliche Theologie*, ed. 2, pp. 813–5.

² Most of the critics who take the view here adopted make the inserted passage begin at *v.* 2. My reasons for thinking *v.* 2 a part of the original psalm are given below, on x. 2. Dogmatism on either side would be out of place.

not the irregularity with which the alphabetic system is carried out be due to the author himself, who would not have his liberty of thought too much confined?' But is not this an improbable assumption? 'In der Beschränkung zeigt sich erst der Meister,' and it was only every other distich which had to begin with a certain letter. There is no analogy for such a mixture of self-limitation and caprice, except indeed in one of the hymns of St. Ephrem edited by Bickell,¹ which, as the editor assures us, betrays a deliberate imitation of Pss. ix., x. And 2, 'Is it certain that Ps. ix. and Ps. x. (putting aside later additions) proceeded from the same hand?' Yes; the evidence from parallels of expression,² combined with the fact of the continuation in Ps. x. of the acrostic system begun in Ps. ix., is decisive on this point. Parallels of expression indeed are not entirely wanting in the two parts of Ps. x.;³ these would decide the unity of authorship of Ps. x., but for the large amount of stylistic difference and of unlikeness of contents. [They do at any rate suggest that the inserted passage, x. 3-11, was superficially harmonised with the older part of Ps. x.] I unwillingly break off here; the critical interest of these psalms (or this psalm) must not lead me into details best reserved for a more special work.

And now let us read Ps. ix. by itself. It is a psalm of mingled import—thanksgiving, glowing anticipations, and supplication. Only once do we catch the note of despondency (*vv.* 14, 15), and there it is remarkable that the psalmist appears to speak as an individual. It is barely possible (see on vi. 6) that the appearance may here be trusted. But the analogy of xxx. 4, 10, lxxxviii. 4-6 would justify us in explaining even this passage of the pious Israel. At any rate we must hold fast to this—that the psalmist writes for the edification of believers in general.

- 2 I will thank Jehovah with my whole heart ;
I will tell out all thy wonders.
- 3 I will be glad and triumph in thee,
I will make melody to thy name, O Most High !
- 4 Because mine enemies turn backward,
stumble and perish at thine (angry) face :
- 5 For thou hast maintained my right and my cause,
thou art seated on the throne, judging righteously.
- 6 Thou hast rebuked the nations, destroyed the ungodly,
their name hast thou wiped out for ever and ever.
- 7 The enemies are consumed, they are perpetual ruins :
and the cities which thou didst uproot—the memory of them has
perished.
- 8 *They* may perish, but Jehovah shall be seated for ever ;
he has prepared his throne for judgment :

¹ In the fourth of the *Carmina Nisibena* (1866); cf. *Conspectus rei Syrorum literariae* (1871), p. 19, n. 18.

² Notice especially the peculiar expressions rendered 'the downtrodden,' 'times or hopeless trouble' (ix. 10, x. 1, 18); the use of 'mortal men,' 'the nations' (ix. 20, x. 18; ix. 5, x. 16); and the appeal, 'Arise, Jehovah' (ix. 20, x. 12).

³ Notice 'contemns' (Jehovah or Elohim), x. 3, 13; 'seek' = 'punish,' x. 4, 13, 15; and especially 'the hapless,' x. 8, 10, 14.

- 9 And he himself shall judge the world in righteousness,
he shall give doom to the peoples in equity :
- 10 That Jehovah may be a sure retreat for the downtrodden,
a sure retreat for times of hopeless trouble ;
- 11 And that they who know thy name may trust in thee,
since thou, Jehovah, dost not forsake those that inquire after thee.
- 12 Make melody unto Jehovah, whose seat is in Zion,
publish his exploits among the peoples,
- 13 How that he who punishes bloodshed has been mindful of them,
he has not forgotten the cry of the afflicted,—
- 14 ‘ Have pity upon me, Jehovah ; behold my affliction from them
that hate me,
thou that liftest me up from the gates of Death :
- 15 That I may tell out all thy praise in the gates of the daughter of
Zion,
that I may exult in thy salvation.’
- 16 The nations are sunk in the pit that they made,
in the net which they hid is their foot taken :
- 17 Jehovah has made himself known, he has executed judgment,
snaring the ungodly in the work of his own hands.
- 18 The ungodly shall depart to Sheól,
all the nations that are forgetful of God.
- 19 For not alway shall the needy be forgotten ;
the hope of the afflicted shall not perish for ever.
- 20 Arise, Jehovah, let not mortal man be too strong ;
let the nations be judged in thy presence.
- 21 Strike them with terror, Jehovah ;
let the nations know that they are mortal men.

3 **O Most High.** *Elyōn*, a word symbolic of God's worldwide sovereignty (see on vii. 18).

4 **Face**, here symbolically for ‘ manifestation of anger ’ (cf. on xvii. 15).

6, 7 As the parallelism shows, **ungodly** = foreign nations (cf. lviii. 11, lxviii. 3, cxxv. 3 ; see also on lxviii. 3). Can we help thinking of Nineveh and Babylon ? See Nah. i. 14, Isa. xiv. 20 (end), 23.—**Perpetual ruins.** Cf. ‘ I will make them . . . lasting ruins ’ (Jer. xxv. 9). Faith cannot be satisfied with weak expressions or imperfect fulfillments.

8 **They may perish.** There is

the same striking antithesis (which reminds us of II. Isaiah in cii. 27. On the text see crit. note.

9 **He himself . . .** See xcvi. 13, xcviii. 9 (post-Exile psalms).—**Give doom.** ‘ He gyueth doom to pore men ’ (Job xxxvi. 6, in Purvey).

10 **A sure retreat.** Strictly ‘ a high fort ’ (cf. xviii. 3), but often used in the sense of ‘ a place of security.’ So too the verb (‘ to set on high ’) ; see xx. 2, lix. 2, &c.—**Times of hopeless trouble.** The word suggests a comparison of such times to places where the prospect is entirely cut off.

12 **Publish his exploits, &c.**

So xcvi. 3, 10, cv. 1 (post-Exile psalms). It is implied that God's great deeds for Israel (*v.* 13) have a wider purpose affecting all mankind. Cf. Isa. xl.-lxvi. *passim*.

13 See Joel iii. 21 (iv. 21). We need not, for this more or less rhetorical passage, compare lxxiv. 19, lxxix. 10, which refer to very definite circumstances in the greatest of Israel's persecutions. The taking of life represents and symbolises all the violent conduct of Israel's persecutors (cf. on Isa. i. 15).—

Who punishes . . . Lit., 'who seeks (satisfaction for the wrong).' In *v.* 10 *b* the same participle occurs, and in x. 4, 13, 15 the verb is used without any expressed object. Cf. Gen. ix. 5, 'I will seek (satisfaction for) the (taken) life of man.'—**The afflicted** (Heb. text, '*anīyyīm*; marg., '*anāvim*'). A standing phrase, not for the Levites (as Graetz strangely supposes¹), but for the pious kernel of the Jewish people (as Joseph Mede already saw two hundred years ago), reminding us of the name 'Ebionites,' which beyond question arose in the apostolic age, and was applied to the Christians in Jerusalem (Harnack, *Dogmengesch.*, 226). Both expressions had of course a derivative moral sense. The distinction between '*anī*' 'afflicted' (with the secondary sense 'humble') and '*anāv*' = *πρᾶνς* is not ratified by the Sept., nor by the contexts of the passages where they occur (see on *v.* 19). Linguistically there is no doubt a formal distinction; '*anī*' = 'one who is bowed down,' '*anāv*' = 'one who bows himself,' but it is a distinction without a substantial difference. The '*anāv*' 'bows himself' in obedience to an outer as well as an inner call, and the '*anī*' may be 'bowed down' with the perfect consent of his own will

(= 'lowly'). To say with Lagarde² that the conception of '*anāvāh*' was borrowed by the Hebrews from the Aramæans, because the latter 'were always a trodden-down race,' is too great a paradox. Pride and humility were equally characteristic of the 'sons of Israel;' not pride alone, but pride and humility. '*Ebh-rāh*, which Lagarde claims as alone Hebraic, belonged, no doubt, not only to Simeon and Levi (Gen. xlix. 7), but to the proud, self-conscious nature inherited from the nomad; but the chastened character commended by the prophets had its roots in the still, quiet temper (*tām* 'friendly,' Philo's *ἡμερὸς*, Gen. xxv. 27) proper to the agriculturist. Cf. on xlv. 5.

14, 15 Either a change in the writer's mood supervenes, or this is the very prayer which God has answered. The speaker's troubles are not merely personal; they are those of all pious Israelites.—**The gates of Death** (i.e. of Sheól; see on vi. 6). So cvii. 18, Isa. xxxviii. 10. The Assyrian Hades had seven walls and gates; cf. Matt. xvi. 18.

18 **Shall depart to Sheól.** Lit., 'shall return.' 'Return is used in two senses, of departure from the point just reached to a point previously left, and of departure from the point reached to a point never previously seen. For the latter (which must be the sense intended here) comp. 2 Chr. xviii. 25, Job i. 21.—**That are forgetful of God**, not as if they had heard of the name and nature of Jehovah, but 'as treading all law and righteousness under foot' (Venema). St. Paul, in Rom. i. 21, says the same and something more. The psalmist is not attacking idolatry, but immorality (comp. l. 22). Note how the changes are rung on remember-

¹ *Krit. Comm. zu den Psalmen*, i. 20, &c. 'Whence comes it,' he asks, 'that these pious, God-fearing, meek persons were at the same time poor and unfortunate? Their situation can only be explained by their belonging to the Levite body, as in fact the author of Ps. xxii., who was decidedly one of "the meek," describes himself as "poor," and must have been a Levite.' I do not see on what grounds this rests, though of course 'the afflicted' might conceivably be a class-name; cf. 'Paterini' (sufferers), the name of the Italian Albigeois.

² *Mittheilungen*, I. 80, 81.

ing and forgetting ; also the continuance of a shadow of national life even in Sheól.

19 **The afflicted.** Heb. *'anāvīm*. The Massoretic marginal reading (K'ri) here is *'aniyyīm* ; in *v.* 13, and in *x.* 12, the margin corrects *'aniyyīm* into *'anāvīm*, assuming the latter to mean 'the meek.' Probably they

had exegetical reasons (see Hengstenberg) ; but the changes were quite unnecessary. See on *v.* 13.

20 **Mortal man.** The idea is that Jehovah being Israel's king, the tyranny of cruel men is an anomaly. See on *lxvi.* 12, and *cf.* *x.* 18, *lvi.* 2, *Isa.* *li.* 12, and especially *2 Chr.* *xiv.* 11 (10).

PSALM X.

SEE on Ps. ix. The Lamed quatrain in the original alphabetic psalm indicated a change in the psalmist's mood ; the later editor therefore bisected the psalm at this point.

- 1 Why, Jehovah, standest thou afar off,
and hidest thee in times of hopeless trouble ?
- 2 The ungodly in his pride hotly pursues the afflicted :
let them be caught in the knaveries which they have devised.
- 3 For the ungodly praises for his soul's desire,
and robbing he blesses (but contemns) Jehovah.
- 4 The ungodly in his arrogance . . . 'He will not punish,'
'there is no God,' is the sum of his thoughts.
- 5 His ways are stable at all times ;
thy judgments are too high in heaven for him to see ;
as for all his foes, he puffs at them.
- 6 He has said in his heart, 'I cannot be moved ;
I shall be firm in my goings age after age.'
- 7 His mouth is full of cursing, deceits, and oppression ;
under his tongue are mischief and trouble.
- 8 He sits in the lurking-places of the villages,
in hiding-places he slays the innocent :
his eyes are on the watch against the hapless.
- 9 He lurks in a hiding-place as a lion in his lair,
he lurks to catch the poor ;
he catches the poor, dragging him with his net.
- 10 * * and, being crushed, (the poor) sinks down,
and the hapless fall by his strong ones.
- 11 He has said in his heart, 'God has forgotten,
he has hidden his face, he can never see it.'
- 12 Arise, Jehovah ! O God, lift up thy hand,
forget not the afflicted.
- 13 Wherefore does the ungodly contemn God,
saying in his heart, 'Thou wilt not punish' ?

- 14 Thou hast seen it ; for thou lookest on mischief and sorrow,
to show forth [vengeance] with thy hand ;
to thee the hapless commits [his way]—
thou provest thyself the helper of the orphan.
- 15 Break thou the arm of the ungodly,
yea, the evil man's ungodliness—punish it, till thou find none.
- 16 Jehovah is King for ever and ever :
the nations are perished from his land.
- 17 Jehovah, thou hast heard the desire of the afflicted,
thou establishedst their heart, thou madest attentive thine ear,
- 18 To right the orphan and the downtrodden,
that mortals of the earth may overawe no more.

2 **Let them be caught, &c.** So A.V. (R.V. marg., 'they are taken'). This is certainly the most natural rendering, as Hupfeld admits ; it has also some ancient authority (Targ., Aquila, Symmachus, Jerome). I adopt it because I incline to think that *v.* 2 was not a part of the later insertion, but completed the Lamed quatrain from the first. Notice the parallelism between *v.* 2 *b* (as rendered above) and ix. 17 *b* ; also the use of the demonstrative *zû* as a relative in *v.* 2 *b* and ix. 16 ; and notice lastly that *m'zimmôth* (comp. xxxvii. 7, in a contemporary alphabetic psalm) is here used in a different sense from *v.* 4 (in the later portion). Most moderns, however, make 'the afflicted' the subject of the verb, the singular ('*ânî* in 2 *a*) and the plural ('*antyyîm* in 2 *b*) alternating as in Gen. xii. 3. This seems necessary, if *vv.* 2 and 3 are to run on consecutively.

3 **For the ungodly praises, &c.** Whom he praises is clear from *v.* 3 *b* ; it is Jehovah, but not the Jehovah of true believers. Like the mercenary shepherds in Zech. xi. 5, they say, 'Blessed be Jehovah that I become rich.' But such 'blessings' argue supreme contempt (comp. *v.* 13) for the Governor of the world, 'the God of recompences' (Jer. li. 56).—**Blesses (but contemns).** Or, 'renounces,

yea, contemns' (so R.V.) See crit. note.

4 **The ungodly, &c.** We should expect a verb to follow, such as 'thinks.' But the construction is suddenly changed.—**There is no God,** i.e. no divine government ; cf. Jer. v. 12, Zeph. i. 12, and see on xiv. 1.

5 **His ways are stable,** i.e. he has no vicissitudes of fortune.—**Thy judgments, &c.** The judgments of which 'the afflicted,' i.e. poor and pious Israelites, speak so much are to him as purely imaginary as their idea of God. Jehovah's dwelling-place is far removed from the stirring scenes of human activity.

6 **Age after age, &c.** This represents the oppressor's feeling ; he never thinks of death. Pride stifles reason. The language of the heart cannot be translated into spoken words without seeming exaggeration. Comp. Hab. i. 11 (R.V.), 'he whose might is his god,' and Isa. xiv. 13, 14 (the self-deification of the king of Babylon).

7 **Under his tongue,** in readiness for uttering, as lxvi. 17, cxl. 4.

8, 9 Comp. lvi. 7, Jer. v. 26. Here again (see on *v.* 6) the remark is justified, that the details of descriptions are not to be pressed too far. To use this passage as an indication of early date, and explain it¹ of

¹ Canon F. C. Cook in *Speaker's Commentary, ad loc.*

'the wild, half-savage nobles who retained habits formed or developed in the troubled period' (of the Judges), is an example of such undue pressure. That there is a certain amount of imaginativeness in the details, seems certain from the imitation in xvii. 11, 12, and also from the change of figure at the end of *v.* 9. But I admit that all is not drawn from the fancy; the mention of the 'villages' must surely be connected with some recent facts. It is possible the editor of this psalm, like the prophet Micah, felt a special interest in country people. The oppression of which he was a witness bore with its full weight upon the 'villages,' though in representing the typical oppressor as the meanest of robbers he simply expresses his horror at the base conduct of the greedy upper class of his time. Incidentally he contrasts these home-tyrants with the cruel but not ignoble foreign oppressors, referred to in Ps. ix. and in many a prophecy. If the Chaldæans may be compared to the eagle, and described as 'bearing themselves proudly,' 'scoffing at kings,' and 'deriding strongholds' (Hab. i.), these unnatural Israelitish tyrants are like treacherous wild beasts,¹ lurking in 'hiding-places' near the unwall'd villages, where the too trustful poor folk dwell. Comp. Eccus. xiii. 18, 'What peace between a hyæna and a dog? and what peace between a rich and a poor man?'—**His eyes,** &c. 'Like those of a tiger in the dark.' See the weakened version of this in xvii. 12.

10 Hebrew poets have a strong sense of proportion, and one cannot

believe that this verse has reached us in its integrity.—**His strong ones,** i.e. probably his claws (Ewald, Delitzsch).

14 This should be a symmetrical quatrain, like the other alphabetic stanzas; the present text must therefore be more or less incorrect. The first line here given is too long; the second too short. According to the text it would be still shorter; but the text-reading yields no satisfactory sense. 'To give it into thy hand' cannot be intended as the object of God's beholding wrong. Many explain as if 'to give' (or 'to lay') could mean 'to keep;' but is this justifiable?

15 **Punish it, till thou find none,** i.e. till the last atom of wickedness be removed. 'Punish' (see on ix. 13) is literally 'seek,' viz. satisfaction. The psalmist, however, combines an allusion to the proverb 'to search for and not find' (xxxvii. 36).

16 The psalmist's warrant for the foregoing prayer. A king by the very conception of kingship must execute judgment.—**The nations,** i.e. Israel's foreign oppressors (as in Ps. ix.)—**Are perished.** The anticipated answer to prayer (see on ix. 6, 7). 'Prayer is possession' (E. Irving).—**From his land.** Not as if limiting the Divine sovereignty. Jehovah is the judge of the world (ix. 9), and yet his throne is in Zion, and Israel is 'his own possession' (cxxxv. 4). Cf. Joel iii. 2, 'my land,' and for the expulsion or excision of foreigners, Nah. i. 15, Isa. lii. 1, Joel iii. 17. The inimitable alliteration is full of meaning; see on xvii. 14.

PSALM XI.

A VIVID little poem full of antitheses—Jehovah on high and the 'children of men,' the righteous and the ungodly, the reward of the one and the punishment of the other. The ideas and expressions resemble those of Psalms v., vii., x., and xvii. A righteous man in trouble is the speaker in *v.* 1, but, as the second line of *v.* 1 shows, it is the Church within the Jewish nation of which the poet thinks. The individualising is merely poetical. There are two seven-lined strophes, and a closing motto.

¹ The figure of the lion in *v.* 9 is even more appropriate in this context than in some of the prophetic descriptions of Assyrian and Chaldæan invaders.

- 1 In Jehovah have I taken refuge ; how say ye to my soul,
‘Flee to your hills, ye birds?’
- 2 For lo ! the ungodly bend the bow,
they make ready their arrow upon the string,
to shoot unseen at the upright in heart.
- 3 When the foundations are being torn down,
what can the righteous do?’
- 4 Jehovah in his holy palace,
Jehovah, whose throne is in heaven—
his eyes behold, his eyelids try the children of men.
- 5 Jehovah approves the righteous,
but the ungodly and him that loves violence his soul hates.
- 6 Upon the ungodly he shall rain fiery coals and brimstone,
and a burning wind shall be the portion in their cup.
- 7 For Jehovah is righteous, he loves righteous acts ;
whoso is upright shall behold his face.

1 *b* Well-meant advice of little faith. A whole picture is condensed in these few words, the explanation of which is given in *v.* 2. The ‘soul’ or personality is imagined as a hunted bird (*vii.* 6, *cxxiv.* 7, *Lam.* *iii.* 52). How gladly would the weak in faith flee as birds (*har* and *çippor* are both collectives) to the ‘rocks of the wild goats’! Cf. *lv.* 7-9.

2 Similar expressions occur in *lxiv.* 3, 4, where they are explained as descriptive of cruel and calumnious language. Here persecution of any kind may be meant.

3 **The foundations**, viz. of the state regarded as a house (as *lxxxii.* 5); less probably, the higher classes of society (as *Isa.* *xix.* 10).—**What can the righteous do?** Or, ‘what has the righteous done?’ (i.e. effected hitherto), as Müller (*Hebrew Syntax*, § 3, 1). Delitzsch and Driver support the first rendering; for the delicate Hebrew idiom, see Driver, *Hebrew Tenses*, § 19. The sense is, ‘What could he conceivably effect?’ Bickell forcibly,

Wenn Säulen stürzen,
Hilft kein Gerechter.

4 **In his holy palace.** Milton’s ‘palace of eternity’ is meant (*xviii.* 7, *xxix.* 9, *Isa.* *vi.* 1, *Hab.* *ii.*

20). ‘Holy,’ implying inviolable security (see on *xciii.* 5).—**His eyelids try**, &c. A Jeremian phrase; cf. *vii.* 10.

6 Lightning, thunderbolts, and simoom (comp. *lviii.* 10, *cxl.* 11, *Ezek.* *xxxviii.* 22, and especially *Gen.* *xix.* 24). One of those pictures of judgment, less frequent in the Bible than in the Korán, which remind us that we are reading an Oriental book. But what lies behind this Orientalism? An important theological conception, expressed thus by Jeremiah: ‘Israel is holiness unto Jehovah; all that devour him shall be counted guilty; evil shall come upon them’ (*Jer.* *ii.* 3). And what if those who ‘devour’ Israel and condemn his ideal are his own children? (*xiv.* 4, *Mic.* *iii.* 3.) Then they must be treated like heathen enemies; ‘the Light of Israel shall be for a fire, and his Holy One for a flame’ (*Isa.* *x.* 17). For Jehovah is surrounded by a fire which guides and comforts His own people (*Ex.* *xiii.* 21, *Isa.* *iv.* 5), but descends in ‘coals of fire’ (*xviii.* 13) on the ungodly. Comp. note on this circle of ideas in *xiv.* 3, and see *crit.* note.

7 **Righteous acts**, i.e. ‘the righteous acts of his rule’ (*Judg.* *v.*

11, R. V.); so 1 Sam. xii. 7, Mic. vi. 5, Isa. xlv. 24. See note on vii. 18.—**Shall behold his face.** The rendering of A. V. is against usage, it is opposed by the parallel passage cxi. 13; comp. 10). We have here a promise of spiritual

communion with God. In this life or the next? The psalmist is not in a mood to answer. He is close upon St. John's conception of 'eternal life' as a present possession. (See further on xvii. 15.)

PSALM XII.

A PSALM in four stanzas or strophes of four lines each, which somewhat reminds us of Ps. v. (note the stress laid on sins of the tongue). The subject is the deep misery of the righteous, against which the psalmist can bring but one remedial agency—a divine promise, contrasting with the proud speeches of the enemies, and possibly taken from some prophetic writing.

- 2 Save, Jehovah, for the man of love is no more,
for the faithful have vanished from among the children of men.
- 3 They speak falsehood every one with his neighbour :
flattering language do they speak with a double heart.
- 4 May Jehovah cut off all flattering lips,
and the tongue that talks grandly,
- 5 Those that say, 'With our tongue do we make a firm covenant,
our lips are our allies ; who is Lord over us?'
- 6 For the oppression of the afflicted, for the groaning of the needy,
now will I arise, saith Jehovah,
I will set him in the safety after which he pants.
- 7 The sayings of Jehovah are pure from dross,
silver well tried (and running) to the ground, seven times
refined.
- 9 All around walk the ungodly,
meanness being on high above the sons of men.
- 8 Mayest thou preserve us, Jehovah,
and guard us from this generation for ever !

2 See on xiv. 3, and Mic. vii. 2, Isa. lvii. 1 (reign of Manasseh?) **The man of love.** Here for the first time we meet with the fine, characteristic word *khāsīd*, which some scholars (represented in the margin of R. V., Ps. iv. 3) render 'one graced or favoured, viz. by God,' but which, as I must think, certainly means rather one who himself practises the virtue of *khēsed*. In l. 5 the phrase is equivalent to Israelite ; here, however, it

has the ethical sense which we find as early as Mic. vii. 2, and as late as Sir. xxxix. 13, 24. There is no English word to express the full meaning of the Hebrew ; I defend my paraphrase by a reference to Prov. xi. 17, '*ish khēsed*, 'a man of love' (the love arising from the sense of a covenant relation ; see on iv. 4). The 'godly' and 'saint' of King James's Bible fail to give the emotional tinge of Hebrew piety. Jehovah requires that a

man should do his duty both to God and to his brother man with a certain warmth of feeling. Love and duty, then, are both implied : comp. 'love is **dutiful** in thought and deed.' Here, however, this duteous love finds its chief sphere among mankind; comp. on xliii. 1.—**The faithful**, i.e. the trustworthy in all the relations of life = 'the upright' in the parallel passage, Mic. vii. 2. 'Faithfulness' is here a department of that 'lovingkindness' which is the bond of Israel's covenant; so in xlv. 5, 'good faith' or 'truthfulness' is a department of 'righteousness.'

5 **With our tongue . . .** The tongue is more than their faithful servant; it unweariedly suggests the most artful lies, the most terrifying threats, which are a stronghold to these wicked ones, as the praises of children are to God's people (viii. 3). The tongue is in fact their ally, better than any 'lord' or 'god' to them. They are in covenant, neither with Baal, nor with Jehovah, but with their tongue.¹ This is Ewald's interpretation of the obscure passage. It is possible to regard one of the idioms as a sign of late date. See crit. note.

7 **Pure from dross**, with no admixture of falsehood; purer than the purity of refined silver. Similar references to the 'promises' or 'sayings' (Heb. *imrah*) of Je-

hovah occur in *late* psalms, cv. 20, cxix. 140 (and often), and a bold critic might include the striking parallel xviii. 31 (cf. Prov. xxx. 5). See also xix. 7-10.—(**And running to the ground**; mentioned as the sign that the smelting process has been effectual. See crit. note.

8 With Hupfeld, I transpose vv. 8 and 9; the gain is clear (cf. on xxxiv. 17, 16).—**All around**, &c. Again the psalmist's courage sinks at the ubiquity and power of the irreligious faction. Israel has become 'like the grape-gleanings of the vintage,' which in point of fact amounts to nothing at all; 'there is no cluster to eat' (Mic. vii. 1). How could it be otherwise, **meanness** (or, vileness, abjectness) **being on high for the sons of men?** 'For' may be here put instead of 'above' (comp. xiii. 3), or it may be a case of the 'dativus incommodi,' so that we might paraphrase, 'the vilest men being promoted to the pain and grief of the common people' (*b'nē 'ādām*, not *b'nē 'ish*). But though this rendering is perfectly possible, the oddness of the phraseology suggests that the text may be corrupt. See crit. note.

9 **From this generation**, i.e. from this class of men (as xiv. 5, xxiv. 6, lxxiii. 15, cxii. 2).

PSALM XIII.

A **STORM-PIECE**, but the storm is a spiritual one. Many pious Israelites may have found in this psalm a true reflection of their feelings in time of persecution. The opening words remind us of those of Ps. lxxiv. Observe that the tristich which forms v. 6 corresponds to that which forms v. 3. The irregularity is designed, and there was no occasion for Sept. to complete v. 6 by inserting vii. 18 b.

- 2 How long, Jehovah, wilt thou 'forget me for ever' ?
how long wilt thou hide thy face from me ?
- 3 How long shall I lay up sorrow in my soul,
heaviness in my heart, day [and night] ?
how long shall mine enemy be on high above me ?

¹ A.V. : 'With our tongue will we prevail' (lit., show ourselves strong). Delitzsch : 'To our tongue we will give strength' (i.e. will give effect to our words).

- 4 Look hither and answer me, Jehovah my God,
lighten mine eyes, lest I sleep unto death ;
5 Lest mine enemy say, 'I have prevailed against him,'
and my foes exult because I am moved.
6 But as for me, in thy lovingkindness is my trust ;
let my heart exult in thy salvation,
let me sing unto Jehovah, for he has dealt bountifully with me.

2 How long . . . for ever ?

A difficult phrase, but only from its excess of meaning. The psalmist, we must suppose, has been ringing the changes on those gloomy words, 'My God has forgotten me, and that for ever; I shall soon sleep the sleep of death.' Day after day and night after night (see *v.* 3) he has lain helpless in Doubting Castle, till at last he plucks out the key of Promise (see Isa. lvii. 16) and exclaims, 'The needy shall not be forgotten for ever' (ix. 19). But the battle is not yet won; the weaker element—the 'soul'—declares, 'with strong crying and tears,' that God has really forgotten for ever. This conflict within the man is reflected in his language. 'How long shall I be in such a state that my lower self is forced to exclaim, God has forgotten me for ever?' Comp. the aposiopesis in vi. 4. Dr. De Witt prefers to regard the second part of line 1 as an additional question, rendering (nearly as A. V.), 'How long, O Jehovah? wilt Thou forget me for ever?' But this explanation does not suit Lam. v. 20. The rendering 'entirely' is plausible, but an unnecessary deviation from usage. Even in lxxiv. 3, Job xxxiv. 36, the ordinary rendering 'for ever' is adequate, both passages being coloured by émotion. Sept. and Symm., εἰς τέλος, which Theodoret interprets παντελῶς; Aquila, τέλειον.

3 In both lines the text has lost something. In *a* it reads, 'How long shall I array plans,' &c. (Sept., βουλὰς); in *b*, 'heaviness . . . by day' (Gesenius violently, 'the whole day'). See crit. note; 'array' and 'lay up' are equally justifiable renderings of the same verb; 'array' corresponds best to 'plans,' 'lay up' to 'sorrow.'

4 Lest I sleep unto death.

Now we see what God's 'forgetting for ever' involved; it meant death, 'the eternal sleep,' Jer. li. 39, 57; for the dead are those whom 'thou rememberest no more,' lxxxviii. 6. Death of the nation? or of the individual? See on vi. 6.

6 A striking contrast to the preceding complaints. The psalmist is in mortal danger, but he trusts still, and this trust, through finding expression, deepens into a sure hope. In line 3 deliverance is even assumed as a fact.—**Dealt bountifully with me**—a heavy rendering of *gāmal ālai*; but how can we reproduce the pregnant sense of *gāmal* (for which cf. Ass. *gimil* 'to do good,' Budge, *Proceedings of Soc. of Bibl. Arch.*, 1883, p. 7)? Sept., τῷ ἐνεργηθέντι με. In a different context, the same phrase might mean 'he hath done evil to me' (cf. vii. 5), the root meaning being probably to complete or accomplish.

PSALM XIV.

'EINER der schwungvollsten Psalmen,' Ewald. Its theme resembles that of Ps. xii. General depravity and practical atheism meet the psalmist at every turn. Illustrating this fact of experience by the truth of God's omniscience, he arrives at the conclusion that things are no better in the

larger theatre of the world. Being a poet, however, and an earnest believer, he expresses this in a dramatic way, reminding us of Psalm ii. The Most High bends over His world (as xxxiii. 13), to see if there be not at least 'ten righteous' (Gen. xviii. 32) in the crowd of evil-doers (comp. xi. 4); but his eyes rest upon a mere mass of moral corruption. Even in Israel, He can only find His own people among the poor and afflicted ones, who are eaten up by the exactions of irreligious oppressors. Thereupon He reveals Himself, to the consternation of those who deny Him and to the joy of those who have fled to Him for refuge. The concluding verse, which is in a different rhythm, contains an aspiration after deliverance (fuller deliverance is probably meant) for Israel. This seems to have been added to give distinctness to the meaning of the psalm in liturgical use.

The psalm evidently belongs to a period either of persecution of the higher religion within the nation, or of oppression exercised upon Israel from without. It was evidently popular, for it exists in a duplicate version (see on Ps. liii.), as also do Pss. xviii. (see 2 Sam. xxii.), xl. 14-18 (see Ps. lxx.), xcvi., and parts of cv., cvi. (see 1 Chron. xvi. 8-36). It is an interesting fact that the later editor of the Psalter respected the integrity of the minor collections which he took up.

On Pss. xiv., xv., xvi., xix. cf. Delitzsch, *Der Dekalog in Exodus und Deuteronomium*, in Luthardt's *Zeitschrift*, 1882, p. 290; on the interpolation in Rom. iii. 10-12, see Field, *Hexapla* (*ad loc.*)

- 1 The fool says in his heart,
 'There is no God.'
Corrupt and abominable are their practices,
 there is none that does good.
- 2 Jehovah looks down from heaven
 upon the children of men,
to see if there be any that deals wisely,
 and inquires after God.
- 3 The whole race has turned aside, together they have become
 tainted ;
 there is none that does good,
 no, not one.
- 4 'Shall they not rue it, all that work naughtiness,
 that eat up my people ?
They have eaten up the bread [of the afflicted],
 they call not upon Jehovah.'
- 5 Thereupon do they shudder indeed, for Elohim
 is in the righteous generation.
- 6 Ye would frustrate the purpose of the afflicted !
 yea, but Jehovah is his refuge.
- 7 Oh that from Zion were come the salvation of Israel !
 when Jehovah turns the fortune of his people,
 let Jacob exult, let Israel be glad.

1 **The fool.** One surely need not suppose that an individual is here stigmatised: 'fool' (*nābhāl*), like 'scoffer' (*lōṣ*), is a class-word; both words denote that kind of ungodliness which not only acts irreligiously, but justifies its irreligion on theoretic grounds, which grounds may be derived either from an erroneous view of the nature of Israel's God or from an absolute negation of His existence. (For the contrast see cxi. 10.) The 'fool' of Isaiah's time is thus defined by the prophet: 'The fool speaks folly, and his heart prepares wickedness, to practise profanity and utter error concerning Jehovah, to make empty the soul of the hungry, and to cause the drink of the thirsty to fail' (Isa. xxxii. 6). The 'fool' of the Maccabean age was one who (like Antiochus Epiphanes) 'insulted' Jehovah and 'contemned (or, blasphemed) his name,' from the point of an alien religion (lxxiv. 18). It is possible that Prov. xxx. 1-4 are quoted from a poem by a post-Exile scoffer of a third, the intellectualistic type. Now, to which class does the 'fool' of our passage belong? There is nothing to suggest an absolute negation of Jehovah (except it be *v. 4 b*). The psalmist at once proceeds (*v. 1 b*) to comment, not on the fool's theory, but on his practices. So in Ps. x., 'there is no God,' is the sum and substance of the fool's thoughts, but, as the same verse shows, this merely means, 'El will not punish,' i.e. the generally recognised God-head, who has no special relation to Israel, has also no special relation to the speaker. So too in xxxvi. 3, which explains the 'oracle' in *v. 2*. And so in Ps. xii., 'who is Lord over us,' means, in Ewald's words, that the speakers 'have transferred their homage to a new sensuous God.' The safest infer-

ence is that of Dr. Benisch—'The utterance quoted is that of atheism characterising an over-refined age, and seeking to reason away the existence of an avenging Deity.'¹ Comp. Jer. v. 12, 'They denied Jehovah and said, He is not,² neither shall evil come upon us;' one among a series of parallels in Jer. v. See also on xxxvi. 2, lxxiii. 11. With the last line compare Savonarola's fervid complaints in his early treatise 'On Contempt of the World': 'Virtues are turned into vices and vices into virtues. There is none that doeth good, no not one.'³ May not this suggest that the psalmist is a disciple of the prophets, and writes in the spirit of Elijah (1 Kings xix. 10, 14; comp. 18) and Jeremiah (Jer. v. 1, 23)?

3 **The whole race has,** &c. Precisely as Jer. v. 23, 'This people has a heart that turns aside and rebels; they have turned aside and gone away.' The prophet and the poet are agreed. Though the former only speaks of Israel, he would not have rejected the wider statement; the symbolic name Jacob, as he well knows, is as applicable to mankind as to the people of Israel.⁴ The expressions used by the psalmist here are still stronger than those in xii. 2. The idea in both passages is that while man, as man, is necessarily sinful, there are times when his sinful impulses manifest themselves on a singularly large scale and in forms singularly displeasing to God. At such times men of heart-religion would not be surprised if the judgment upon Sodom and Gomorrah were to be repeated (xi. 6). —**No, not one.** The same result of a divine scrutiny as in Jer. v. 1.

4 A divine speech, in spite of the inconsistency in *l. 4*. **Shall they not rue it?** Literally, 'Shall they not come to know [their folly]?'

¹ *Miscellanies of Jewish Literature* (by various writers), p. 119.

² This cannot mean positive or theoretic atheism, for in Jer. v. 2 the same persons are described as swearing by Jehovah.

³ Creighton's *History of the Popes*, iii. 146.

⁴ An inference from the Hebrew of Jer. xvii. 9, 'The heart [of man] is treacherous [*āqābh*].'

Comp. Isa. v. 19, ix. 9. It is best to take this view of the text in preference to that which found favour with the Massoretic critics. The surprise and anger which the speaker evidently feels receive thus a more vigorous expression, and the transition to *v.* 5 becomes more natural. The case would be different if we accepted the form given to the next verse in Ps. liii. (see note there).—**That eat up . . . upon Jehovah.** This arrangement of the verse seems to me, as well as to De Dieu, Hupfeld, and Bickell, rhythmically preferable to the Massoretic one adopted by A.V. The figure of 'eating' a people is common in Hebrew; sometimes it is applied to the destruction wrought by invaders (Num. xiv. 9, and especially Jer. x. 26, Ps. lxxix. 7), sometimes to the cruelties of native oppressors (Mic. iii. 3, Prov. xxx. 14). I have said above why I prefer the parallel from Micah to that from Jeremiah as illustrative of the meaning. The 'workers of naughtiness' and the 'eaters of my people' are designations of unworthy Israelites who do not own Jehovah with heart-homage, and whom Jehovah will not own as His people. 'My people,' spoken doubtless in pitying tones (comp. Isa. iii. 12, 15), means those who are so often called 'the afflicted' (see on ix. 13). So far all is plain. Then follows, according to the text, 'they eat [or, they have eaten] bread; they call not upon Jehovah.' How are these two clauses related to each other, and to the context? The former clause seems to be incomplete; the distich to which it belongs is not symmetrical compared with its fellows. Whatever explanation of the passage we adopt, this has to be borne in mind, and the incompleteness must be conjecturally removed. Three views of the meaning may plausibly be taken. The Targum explains thus: 'Do not all the workers of a lie know that food is given by him? why then do not

the devourers of my people, who eat bread, bless the name of the Lord?' Following this we might render, 'They eat bread, [and are full,] and call not upon Jehovah,' viz. to 'bless Him for the good land which He has given them' (Deut. viii. 10). But thus we get no connexion with the context. De Dieu indeed provides one¹ by taking the 'eaters' to be the Babylonian oppressors of the Jews, and the 'not calling upon Jehovah' to be the omission of a proper 'grace after meat' consequent on the profession of heathenism! A second possible view may be mentioned—to render, 'They eat bread, [they drink wine;] they do not call upon Jehovah,' and explain this of the absorption in sensuous enjoyment which God would soon interrupt by a frightful catastrophe (comp. Isa. xxi. 5). This is better than the first view, but we still miss a connexion with the first part of the verse. The third view seems to supply this want. I do not offer it as certain, but as plausible; it is due to Bickell, who has however since then changed his opinion, not (I feel sure) for the better. We should paraphrase thus: 'They have eaten up the bread that the afflicted should eat, they have robbed Jehovah of his homage.' Who can help comparing Isa. iii. 14, 'So then ye have devoured the vineyard; the spoil of the afflicted is in your houses'? Precisely as in that passage the second clause explains the first, so here 'eating the bread of the afflicted' explains the sense in which the oppressors were called in the first distich 'those who eat up my people.' The latter phrase means more than δημοβόρος βασιλεὺς (*Il.* i. 231; comp. 1 Sam. viii. 14-17); it implies that, instead of, or in addition to, the customary exactions of a royal master, the mass of poor Israelites had now to undergo the unmitigated oppression of a multitude of despots who were void of that heart-religion characteristic of

¹ *Animadversiones in Vet. Test. libros omnes* (1648), p. 315.

the 'poor' and 'afflicted.' Long ago, Amos had denounced the selfishness of the rich creditors who 'trode upon the helpless, and took from him presents of wheat' (Am. v. 11). Kindred expressions of Isaiah have been quoted already; it is interesting to notice that one mark of 'folly' in Isa. xxxii. 6 is depriving the poor man of his livelihood. The concluding words of the verse describe the injury done to Jehovah. The two middle lines of the verse refer to the afflicted; the first line and the last refer to the afflicted one's God. 'Workers of naughtiness' expresses the character of a class of men in the sight of Jehovah. He who judges men by their deeds can find no moral element in the works of these tyrants. The words, 'they call not upon Jehovah,' explain the secret of this; such men have no communion of the heart with God. They are of those 'who say inwardly, Jehovah does neither good nor evil' (Zeph. i. 12), i.e. He is a non-moral deity, and leaves the world to itself. Those who carry the sheaves may be hungry (Job xxiv. 10), but He cares not; bread is not 'the bread of the afflicted,' but of those who possess that might which is really their 'god' (Hab. i. 11; cf. Mic. ii. 1). Having no conscience, the rich oppressors of

course do not pray, at least with the heart. But in the very midst of their cankered prosperity, a great change comes (see next verse). Such appears to be the connexion. Note the stress laid in this passage upon prayer, which may possibly be an indication of date; cf. Isa. xliii. 22 (with note) and Isa. xxvi. 16.

5 **Thereupon**, i.e. when Jehovah has thus spoken. The perfect of prophetic certitude follows.—**In the righteous generation.** There is, besides, another 'generation' (see xii. 10), but this one has an invisible ally in Jehovah. This limitation of the divine presence to a section of the natural community of Israel is very striking. Comp. Isaiah's doctrine of the righteous remnant.

6 **Ye would frustrate**, &c. Probably an allusion to some religiously important object which the psalmist and his friends were hoping to gain.

7 **From Zion.** This verse has the air of a liturgical addition. Both in the Exile and the post-Exile period, Zion and salvation are connected ideas; comp. cxxi. 1, Isa. lii. 7, 8, and especially lxvi. 6 (as I believe, a post-Exile passage).—**Turns the fortune.** Against the rendering, 'brings back the captives,' see crit. note.

PSALM XV.

Ps. xiv. gave an emphatic recognition to prayer (*v.* 14). Ps. xv. aptly follows with its description of the conditions upon which communion with God may be enjoyed. Add to it Ps. xxiv. 1-6 and Isa. xxxiii. 15-16, and you have a fine triad of poetic catechisms on the elements of moral religion.

Ps. xv. reminds us somewhat of the declaration of innocence pronounced by the soul before the tribunal of Osiris in the Book of the Dead (ch. cxxv.) Only ten testing qualities, however, are mentioned in the psalm.

- 1 Jehovah, who can be a guest in thy pavilion?
who can dwell upon thy holy mountain?
- 2 He that walks blamelessly, and works righteousness,
and speaks truth with his heart: *determines (only) truth*
- 3 He that has no slander upon his tongue,
that does no ill to his companion,
nor utters a reproach against his neighbour:

- 4 Despicable is a reprobate in his eyes,
but those that fear Jehovah doth he honour ;
if he swear to (his) hurt, he changes not :
- 5 He that gives not his money for usury,
nor takes a bribe against the innocent :
he that does these things can never be moved.

1 It is a plausible account which A.V. gives of this psalm in the heading, 'David describeth a citizen of Zion.' By 'Zion' it means (see Ps. xxiv. A.V.) the Messianic or spiritual Zion spoken of in the prophecies of Isaiah (Isa. ii., iv., xi.) Plausible but superficial; for the *gēr* ('foreign guest' or 'sojourner') was only a 'half-citizen' (Ewald'), and required the protection of an Israelite. 'To be Jehovah's guest' means primarily 'to enjoy an inviolable security.' The phrase is connected on the one hand with the old customs of hospitality, and on the other with the ancient Semitic right of sanctuary, which lingered on, though with limitations, in Israel (Ex. xxi. 14, I Kings i. 51, ii. 29). It is an aggravation of the offences of the ungodly that 'they slay the widow and the sojourner' (xciv. 6), and the readiness with which the duty of hospitality is still accepted among the Arabs is shown by the everyday formula, 'I am the *ḍakhīl* of such an one,' i.e. 'I claim his protection.' Social customs are one great source of religious imagery, and so it is not surprising that we find a Hebrew worshipper describing himself as the 'guest' of Jehovah, and Phœnician inscriptions² containing the names Gersacun ('guest of Sacun'), Germelkart ('guest of Melkart'), Gerastart

('guest of Astarte'), and even Gerhecal ('guest of the temple'). The prominent idea in all these names is not so much participation in the sacrificial feasts, as Renan would have it,³ but the enjoyment of divine protection; comp. the Arabic phrase for an inhabitant of Mecca, *jār-ullah*, 'God's protected one.'⁴ The faithful worshipper has, as it were, 'taken sanctuary,' whether he lives near his god's shrine or not. But what constitutes fidelity? Abundant material sacrifices, or 'walking blamelessly'? The psalmists differ from their heathen neighbours; 'evil cannot be a guest of thine' (v. 5). Jehovah's requirements are far greater than those of Astarte; on the other hand, his gifts are proportionately valuable. His 'guest' is secure in a far deeper than the common sense of the phrase. See lxi. 5, where it is very clear that a deep spiritual meaning lies behind the words (see on xxvii. 4).—**Pavilion.** Milton's synonym for 'tent' (see his version of iii. 18) is adopted for rhythm. 'Tent' or 'pavilion' = 'house' (comp. cxxxii. 3, 'the tent of my house,' I Kings viii. 66). More especially, as the context shows, the temple is meant; nothing compels us to think of the Davidic 'tabernacle.'—**Upon thy holy mountain.** 'Holy,' i.e. unapproachable by sinners (see xxiv. 3).

¹ *Antiquities*, p. 236, note 9. Kuenen, however, has noted variations in the different legal systems overlooked by Ewald. See, e.g., *Hibbert Lectures* (1882), p. 183.

² For the three former, see Euting, *Punische Steine*, pp. 13, 15, 16; for the latter, *Corpus Inscr. Semit.*, tom. i. fasc. 2, pp. 132, 133.

³ *Le Judaïsme et le Christianisme* (1883), p. 9.

⁴ The Arabic verb *jāra* in conj. iii. and iv. means 'to receive under protection;' in x. 'to ask protection.' Compare *Hamḍa*, p. 51, 'A mountain have we where dwells he whom we take under our protection;' and *Korān*, ix. 6, 'And if any one of the idolaters ask thee for protection, then receive him under protection . . . then let him gain his place of safety.'

On this sense see Baudissin, *Studien zur semit. Religionsgeschichte*, ii. 91, 92.

2 And speaks truth. The importance and the range of truthfulness was only recognised by degrees. The Decalogue, however, contains the germs of subsequent developments. Ex. xx. 16 refers to all kinds of false statements respecting a neighbour; and a preceding law, Ex. xx. 7, contains a still more comprehensive prohibition of false asseverations, that is, if **לשוא** means 'for a falsehood.' (It implies that an Israelite, in affirming something, would naturally appeal to Jehovah, and requires that this appeal shall not be made 'with reference to vanity.') The Egyptians, however, were beyond the Israelites in emphasising the religious duty of truthfulness. This Elysium in 'Amenti' was called 'the land of truth of speech,' and line 7 of the declaration of the soul (referred to above) ran, 'I have lied in no man's face.'—**With his heart.** We should say, 'from the heart.' But the Hebrew regards the lips as merely the servants of

the heart, i.e. of the mind and conscience (comp. xii. 3). So too the hands; hence Isa. xxxii. 6, 'his heart does iniquity.'

4 If he swear to (his) hurt. Literally, 'to do evil;' the context shows that he himself is the sufferer in the case supposed. The allusion is to the law in Lev. v. 4, which supplements Ex. xx. 7, 'If any one swear in idle talk to do evil or to do good,' (he shall confess and make atonement for his sin); or at least to some current law in which the obligation of keeping one's word was expressed in similar phraseology. Followers of Wellhausen will grant that the technical phrases of Leviticus may in part be ancient.—**He changes not,** i.e. he does not go from his word. Not, therefore, in the technical sense of Lev. xxvii. 10, 33.

5 He that gives not, &c. To the poor Israelite such a man lends gratuitously (xxxvii. 26, cxii. 5; comp. Prov. xxviii. 8). Here, too, there is an allusion to some current law, probably to Ex. xxii. 24 or Deut. xxiii. 19; comp. Lev. xxv. 37.

PSALM XVI.

IF this were the only psalm with the title *Mikdam*, one could easily adopt the explanation 'a golden song,' this psalm being, as De Dieu says, like gold for preciousness. God, the one great good, is its theme, and it is written not only for the Jewish Church (Theodore of Mopsuestia) but for any pious Israelite. Alluding, perhaps, to the close of a neighbouring psalm (xii. 8), the psalmist opens with a short petition for preservation (*v.* 1); he then assumes the tone, successively, of profession, description, and prophecy. He professes his own utter faith in Jehovah, which makes all other joys pall, and his exclusive attachment to his spiritual leaders (2, 3). Why this mention of Jehovah and Jehovah's 'noble ones' in the same breath? Because, in times like the present, a man's society is the test of his religion. There are many recreant Israelites who have fallen into heathenism; intercourse with these would too surely involve a share in their defilement. 'At every table was the altar, on every tongue the light oath, of idolatry.' But loneliness is no grief to the believer; his mind is to him a kingdom. Jehovah is at his side, and knowing this, he would not change his lot (4-6). He blesses Him who guides him in accordance with his wise purpose (lxxiii. 24) and is jealous (like Bishop Ken) of the sleep which cuts short his Hallelujahs. He continually looks to Israel's invisible Guide; this is his talisman (7, 8). And now from description he passes to prophecy. He is confident that Israel's work is not yet done, and that even for him (however his persecutor's may rage,

or may lately have raged) a share in this work is reserved. But he seeks something more—not ‘in the world to come life everlasting’—but ‘a path of life’ beginning here, though broadening in what later writers called the ‘age to come’ (9-12). Jehovah’s guest begins his banquet on earth (xxiii. 5); the psalmist would not have portrayed the present age as only the vestibule leading to the *triclinium* or banquet-hall, i.e. the world to come.¹ In fact, his antithesis is not this world and the next, but life with God and life without God (comp. xvii. 14).

But more of this below. The prevalent misapprehension of the psalm seemed to call for the above analysis. What is wanted to understand such poems is, first, a feeling for literature, and secondly, a strong and deep theistic consciousness. To follow the leadings of these inward monitors obliges us to modify the sense of the words ‘Davidic’ and ‘Christian.’ To us, the former becomes a symbolic term for vigour and originality of style, and the latter describes a peculiar spiritual intuition and tone of feeling. Ps. xvi. is in a high degree both Davidic and Christian. Comparing it with neighbouring psalms more or less parallel, we find little in it that is absolutely new, but the intensity with which all is felt and expressed makes it seem original. All earthly desires are stilled; the psalmist is in the mood of the writer of lxxiii. 25, 26.

For a special study of Ps. xvi., see Dr. Robertson Smith, *Expositor*, 1876, pp. 341-372. See also Delitzsch (see introd. to Ps. xiv., end), who remarks that Ps. xvi. is a development of the idea that all Israel is ‘a kingdom of priests and an holy nation’ (Ex. xix. 6). On the linguistic relation of this and the next psalm, see crit. note.

- 1 Preserve me, O God ; for I seek refuge in thee.
- 2 I say unto Jehovah, ‘Thou art my Lord,
without thee my welfare is nought,
- 3 And in thy noble ones is all my delight.’
- 4 They multiply their own griefs who change for another :
their drink-offerings of blood will I not pour out,
nor take their names upon my lips.
- 5 Jehovah is mine appointed portion and cup,
thou wilt be continually my lot.
- 6 My measuring-lines have fallen in pleasant places ;
yea, I have a delightsome heritage.
- 7 I will bless Jehovah, who has given me counsel :
yea, in the night-seasons mine own reins admonish me.
- 8 I have set Jehovah before me continually :
for with him at my right hand I cannot be moved.
- 9 Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory exults,
my flesh also dwells in safety.
- 10 For thou wilt not give up my soul to Sheól,
neither wilt thou suffer thy loving one to see the pit ;
- 11 Thou makest known to me the path of life ;
near thy face is fulness of joys,
all pleasant things are in thy right hand for ever.

¹ *Pirke Aboth*, iv. 23 (Taylor).

2, 3 An emphatic confession of faith, supplemented by a declaration of brotherly fellowship with Jehovah's 'noble ones.' The correction in *v.* 3 (see crit. note) relieves the text from great awkwardness.

2 **I say.** An emphatic introduction to the confession of faith which follows; comp. xci. 2.—**My Lord.** So Adonai must be rendered in xxxv. 23. There is thus a contrast to the 'Who is Lord over us' of xii. 5.—**Welfare have I none,** &c., i.e. to Thee alone do I look for happiness. I would not lay, too much stress on the point, but the writer seems here (comp. *v.* 6) to imply that, though danger still threatens, a comparative degree of prosperity is enjoyed. The context of lxxiii. 25, 26 is quite different.

3 **Thy noble ones.** The Hebrew *addir* expresses here 'amplitude' of rank and power, as Jer. xxv. 34-36, 2 Chron. xxiii. 20, Neh. x. 30 (see on xciii. 4). Jehovah's 'noble ones' are opposed to worldly grandees; possibly the priests are meant, who in 1 Chron. xxiv. 5 are called 'hallowed princes.' The interpolated line in this verse comes from the margin; it does not, indeed, make the verse senseless, if we approach it with a disposition to find a particular meaning. We have then a declaration that the 'noble ones' in whose company the speaker delights are 'the holy ones that are in the land.' 'Holiness,' i.e., in this connexion, severance from the impurities of heathenism, is specially the mark of the Maccabean rising (see on l. 5); but of course we are not shut up to the theory that this is a Maccabean psalm. Holiness is the predominant thought of the whole post-Exile period. 'Holy ones' occurs again of individuals in xxxiv. 10; the expression says more than 'holy people' (Isa. lxiii. 18, Dan. xii. 7). In Num. xvi. 3 the two statements, that the people is holy, and that its members are holy, are virtually combined. 'In the land' of course

means in Canaan. The phrase suggests that many Jews were not 'holy'; cf. the phrases 'the quiet in the land' (xxxv. 20), 'the faithful of the land' (ci. 6). Cf. also 'his holy ones' (xxxiv. 10), where, however, the context does not require the same shade of meaning as here.

4 **Their own griefs.** Comp. Jer. ii. 19, Isa. l. 11 (*not* cxxxix. 24). Jehovah is a 'jealous God,' and will not 'give His glory to another' (Isa. xlii. 8).—**Who change for another.** We do not often in these psalms meet with direct references to idolatry. This is the first, unless there be another in iv. 3. For the phraseology, see cvi. 20, Jer. ii. 11. There may be a secondary meaning, 'purchase,' *māhārū* alluding to *mōhar*, the purchase-money for a wife; comp. Isa. lvii. 9. That idolatry was a constant temptation to Israel needs no showing. It was not least so after the Return, as is clear, not indeed from Isa. lvii. 5, 6, but certainly from Isa. lxxv. 1-7, 11, and from 1 Macc. i.—**Their drink-offerings of blood.** 'Of blood' is best taken figuratively (so Kimchi); comp. Isa. lxvi. 3, 'He that slaughters an ox is a man-slayer.' The psalmist execrates the apostasy of these men so much that the choice wine of their libations (comp. Isa. lxxv. 11) is to him as offensive as the blood of a human sacrifice. (It is not the bloodshed of rapine—comp. Isa. i. 15—which is referred to; an error of Kimchi's.) On this view, the phrase 'their drink-offerings of blood' is as comprehensive as 'their idol-names' in the next line. The figure involved may seem somewhat harsh, but remember the poetic expression 'the blood of grapes,' Gen. xlix. 11. Accepting the post-Exile origin of the psalm, I think this view the most probable. Otherwise we might hold that heathenism in general is credited with the abominations of particular cults in which it found its climax. Human sacrifices were certainly offered to Moloch in Judah in the time of Ahaz and later (see 2 Kings xvi. 3,

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Isa. lvii. 5, 6). That literal blood-libations are meant is held by Ibn Ezra, and among the moderns by Calvin, Ewald, Baethgen, and Dr. Robertson Smith. Dr. Trumbull, specialising too much, sees an allusion to a custom connected with the rite of blood-brotherhood, still recognised in Syria as a primitive custom.¹ It is worth remarking that libations appear to have been more prominent both in the heathen cults of Palestine and in the quasi-heathen worship of Jehovah (see Hos. ix. 4) than in the Levitical worship. — **Their names**, viz. those of the idol-gods whom the renegades invoked; cf. Ex. xxiii. 13, Hos. ii. 17 (Heb. 19).

5 Mine appointed portion and cup. Two figures are combined; first that of the distribution of the communal land with which we meet again in *v.* 6 (comp. Cambridge Bible on Mic. ii. 5), next that of a host filling up his guest's cup (comp. xxiii. 5). The first figure properly belongs to Israel (Jer. x. 16, li. 19), but, as lxiii. 26 and the name Hilki'ah show, it was appropriated by individual believers. — **My lot**, a synonym for 'my portion'; comp. Isa. lix. 7, 'they, they are thy lot.' 'Continually' is added, because the believer feels one with a God who is eternal. Comp. lxiii. 23, 'I am continually with thee,' and *v.* 26, 'God is for ever . . . my portion.' The Massoretic reading is variously rendered, 'Thou holdest fast,' and 'Thou makest broad (my lot).' But there are strong objections to it.

6 My measuring-lines . . . in pleasant places. This may of course be a materialising expression for the 'pleasantness' (i.e. tender friendship, xxvii. 4) of Israel's God. But it is clear from *v.* 2 *b* and *v.* 8 *b* that outward prosperity and security are prominent in the writer's mind: in short, he is not merely conscious of Jehovah's favour in the heart, but sees it expressed in act. Was not Canaan, 'the lot of your

inheritance' (cv. 11), a 'pleasant place'? (see cvi. 24, Mal. iii. 12.) Does not the psalmist mean, not only his 'pleasant' or gracious God, but the land which Jehovah has 'chosen'? Spiritual and material blessings are not yet separated; Jehovah and Jehovah's land are both the 'portion' of Israel. Comp. 1 Macc. xiv. 8, &c., 'And [in the days of Simon] they tilled their ground in peace, and the earth gave her products, and the trees of the field their fruit. Elders sat in the streets; all communed together of good things; and the young men put on honours and warlike apparel. . . . He made peace in the land, and Israel rejoiced with great joy.' May not these be among the 'pleasant things' in Jehovah's right hand (*v.* 11)? Comp. Job. xxxvi. 11.

7, 8 See introd. Others explain the 'admonishing' of the moral warnings of conscience. But the 'reins' mean the feelings, which stimulate to the expression of joy or gratitude (comp. Prov. xxiii. 16), not the reason, nor the conscience.

9 The psalmist's joy in God is no mere physical sensation. A holy calm fills his body, and a rapturous joy his inner man, while the 'heart' brings all this into the full light of the central consciousness. So in Prov. xiv. 10, 'The heart knows the grief of one's soul.' The same *ap-parent* trichotomy occurs in lxxxiv. 3; remember, however, that the true Hebraic division of human nature is into soul and flesh (see, e.g., lxiii. 2).

10, 11 See introd. for the sense in which these verses may without any effort be called Christian. *V.* 11 is easier than *v.* 10. 'Life,' 'joys,' and 'pleasant things' are all those good things, both material and spiritual, which the author of Prov. i.-ix. repeatedly holds out in prospect to the God-fearing man. That beautiful didactic poem, and the psalms which resemble it (e.g. Ps. xxxiv.), treat of the 'beginning of wisdom,' but the 'secret of Jehovah'

¹ *Blood-covenant*, p. 251 (cf. p. 6)—a striking passage.

(xxv. 14) must be sought in psalms like this. He who has God for his 'portion' cannot attach an extreme importance to what 'men of the world' (xvii. 14) call 'life.' He does, indeed, value it, highly value it, but more for Israel's sake than for his own. The sad complaints in vi. 4-7 express the despondency of one who fears deeply for Israel. The title, 'Thou that liftest me up from the gates of Death' (ix. 14), refers to some past national trial little less bitter than death. The thanksgiving of one alive from the dead in xxx. 4 is spoken in the name of the true Israel. And so the psalmist in v. 10 is thinking of Israel when he says, in the *πληροφορία* of faith, 'Thou wilt not give up my soul to Sheól.' But not of Israel only (so Theodore of Mopsuestia). Israel's work is not yet finished; and Israel needs my help. Therefore 'I (like Israel) shall not die but live, and tell out the works of Jehovah' (cxviii. 17). Pleasant are God's earthly gifts, but not for selfish reasons do I seek them. 'Let the pleasantness of Jehovah our God be *over us*, and *the work of our hands* prosper thou over us' (xc. 18). But the psalmist may have soliloquised still further. It is consistent with his view of things to imagine him speaking thus: When my own share in this work is over, and the hand of Sheól takes hold of me, then He who is my portion, and whose portion I am (see Deut. xxxii. 9, 2 Macc. xiv. 15), will 'set free my soul' (xlix. 16), will finish 'making known' to me 'the path of life,' will give me 'joys' and 'pleasant things' which last for ever; above all, will 'receive me with glory' (lxxiii. 24), and bring me nearer to Thy face (v. 11, xvii. 15).

An important question arises here, to which two very different

answers have been given, the truth lying probably midway between them. How far can passages like this be employed in illustration of the belief of the average pious Israelite? M. Halévy thinks¹ that, few and incidental as are the references to Sheól in the Old Testament, and careful as both narrators and poets are to spiritualise popular expressions and to transform them into poetical images, 'the form of the popular beliefs disengages itself in a luminous manner—beliefs which are evidently identical with those which the Assyrio-Babylonians professed relatively to the fate of man after death.' Putting together the notices of Enoch and Elijah and the phraseology of Ps. xvi., xlix., lxxiii., and Prov. xii. 28,² he concludes that 'the pious Hebrew hoped to escape from Sheól, either by ascending alive into heaven, or by being received after a short sojourn in Hades into the presence of Jehovah, seated at whose right hand he would enjoy everlasting delights.' Some Christian critics will strongly object to this, as confusing the distinction between the Old Testament and the New. Others, with whom I agree, will steer a middle course.³ They will draw that most important distinction between the spiritualising monotheistic writers of the canonical books and the *average* believer in Sheól, but require as a preliminary to any inferential reconstruction of Jewish beliefs a critical examination of the date, origin, and object of each writing to which reference may be made. They will see in M. Halévy a predisposition to identify popular Jewish beliefs with those of the Assyrio-Babylonians, without allowing room for a somewhat different course of development among the different peoples, and to extract

¹ *Revue archéologique*, juillet 1882, p. 53, &c; cf. *Mélanges de critique*, p. 368, &c.

² On the psalm-passages my notes will show how far I agree with M. Halévy. Against his rendering of אֱלֹהִים Prov. xii. 28, 'immortality,' see *Job and Solomon*, p. 123.

³ At the last moment I can specify among these Dr. A. Jeremias (*Die bab.-ass. Vorstellungen vom Leben nach dem Tode*, 1887, the appendix of which is concerned with the O. T.

a more definite form of belief from the Hebrew records than it is always quite safe to do. That traces of mythic ideas of Sheól do exist in the Old Testament I have long since repeatedly admitted, also that both in primitive times and in the Exile period the Israelites came under the influence of Babylonian conceptions, but reserves and qualifications have to be made all along the course that M. Halévy has taken.—**Thy loving one.** The phrase implies an argument. 'Thou wilt preserve me because of the bond of loving-kindness (*khésed*; see on v. 8) which unites Thee to Israel.' So another psalmist, 'Preserve thou my soul,

for I am duteous in love' (*khāsīd*), lxxxvi. 2. Have we not here a foregleam of Christianity? (The exposition of vv. 10, 11 may, I know, be weakened, but only by a wholesale introduction of hyperbole both here and elsewhere—see on Ps. xxi.)—**The pit** (as vii. 16, ix. 16, xlix. 10). That *shakhath* commonly means 'pit' is undeniable; and that there should be a second *shakhath* = 'corruption' is not at all probable (as Perowne has already pointed out). Even in Job xvii. 14 the ordinary sense seems to me sufficient. But does not the rendering 'pit' impair the Messianic element in the psalm? No (see Perowne, *Psalms*, i. 205).

PSALM XVII.

THE complaint of the nobler Israel personified, of a representative pious Israelite; comp. v. 11. The assertions of innocence are to be explained as in vii. 9.

The tone is in marked contrast to that of Ps. xvi.; it more resembles that of Pss. vii., x.—psalms of painful and agitated feeling. The antithesis presupposed is within the sphere of the religion of Jehovah; it is not that of Jehovism and heathenism, but that of morality and immorality. Pss. xvi. and xvii. agree indeed in one respect, viz. that in both the psalmist rises above the struggles of his day into the pure air of mystic devotion, where God is felt to be the all-sufficient 'portion' (see on xvi. 5, xvii. 14). The points of contact between them (see Ewald and Delitzsch) have been pressed too far; there is a more striking relation (see v. 14) to Ps. xlix. (where *הִלַּל* occurs in the sense of world, xlix. 2), to Job (see xx. 26 a), and to Ecclesiastes (where we find the phrase 'in life,' i.e. in the life of the senses, Eccles. vi. 12, ix. 9). For though these parallels are suggested by a single verse of one psalm, even Bickell does not regard this passage as an interpolation. We may add that the phrasing of the confession of faith in xlix. 15 illustrates that in xvii. 15. The style of Ps. xlix. may be smoother than that of Ps. xvii., but the Book of Job itself contains examples of the calmer and of the more excited style; the moods of the wise men who discussed these deep problems would vary with their circumstances. Ps. xvi., again, differs in tone from each of these psalms, while Ps. lxxiii. reminds us in various degrees of all of them, though in the bright happiness of its conclusion it alone can be compared to Ps. xvi.

- 1 Harken unto innocency, Jehovah ;
attend unto my piercing cry ;
give ear unto my prayer from guileless lips.
- 2 Let my sentence come forth from thy presence ;
let thine eyes behold uprightly.
- 3 Thou triest my heart, thou visitest it by night,
thou assayest me, but canst find no evil device ;
my mouth transgresses not.

- 4 As for the doings of men, by the word of thy lips
I have shunned the paths of the spoiler.
- 5 My steps have held fast to thy tracks,
my feet have not trembled.
- 6 I (being such an one) call upon thee, for thou wilt answer me, O
God ;
incline thine ear unto me, hear my speech.
- 7 Make passing great thy kindnesses, O saviour of those that flee
for refuge
from them that assail, by thy right hand.
- 8 Watch over me as the apple of the eye,
cover me with the shadow of thy wings,
- 9 From the wicked ones who treat me with violence,
my greedy enemies, who compass me about.
- 10 Their unfeeling heart they have shut tight,
with their mouth they speak haughtily.
- 11 No step of ours but they are already about us,
with eyes fixed on our swerving in the path. *land*
- 12 He is like a lion longing to tear in pieces,
and as it were a young lion lurking in secret places.
- 13 Up, Jehovah, confront him, make him bow down,
deliver my soul from the wicked by thy sword,
- 14 From men of the world, whose portion is in life,
and whose belly thou fillest with thy treasure,
who are full of sons, and leave their abundance to their
children.
- 15 As for me, I shall behold thy face in righteousness ;
may I be satisfied, when I awake, with thine image !

1 **My piercing cry.** De Witt, 'my wailing.' See on v. 11.

3, 4 Comp. on vii. 9, 10. The divine searcher will find me free from sin in thought, in word, and in deed, that is, sincerely faithful to the Law. Sins of thought are examined **by night**, when the thoughts and imaginations rove unchecked, and thus call for the divine Judge. —**The spoiler** ; or, 'the robber' —the type of lawlessness (Hos. vii. 1). Cf. x. 3, 7.

7 **Make passing great**, &c. See on iv. 4. 'Surpassingness' is the mark of the divine (Judg. xiii. 18, Isa. ix. 5, Heb.)

8 The figures may be borrowed

from Deut. xxxii. 10, 11 ; cf. on xxxvi. 8, xci. 4.

9-12 Comp. vii. 2, x. 8-12, xxii. 13, 14, 17, 18, lvii. 5, lviii. 7.

10 **Their unfeeling heart.** Lit., 'their caul' (the membrane surrounding the heart, Hos. xiii. 8, A.V.) Comp. lxxiii. 7.

13 **Confront him.** Or, 'intercept him' (when he is in act to spring). 'Bow down' of the lion, as Gen. xlix. 9.

14 On the text see crit. note, and on the points of contact with Ps. xlix., Job, and Eccles., see introd. —**Men of the world**, &c. 'The world' and 'life' have here a special and deep signification. A true Is-

raelite has a better home than 'the world,' and a greater prize than the 'life' of the senses (lxiii. 4). He has 'laid hold on the life which is life indeed' (1 Tim. vi. 19, R.V.), or, in Old Testament language, he dwells in the 'house of Jehovah,' that 'living God' who 'makes known to him the path of life' (see introd.) With 'men of the world' comp. the phrase 'the children of this æon,' opposed to 'the children of light' (Luke xvi. 8). Comp. also 'mortals of the earth' (x. 18), which reminds us of the phrase 'he that is of the earth' (John iii. 31). Note in passing the religious use of the term 'portion' as a synonym for 'protecting deity' (see on xvi. 5). 'Life,' or pleasure, is in fact idolised.—**Whose belly**, this part of the body being regarded as the seat of greed and avarice; comp. Job. xx. 11, 'nothing escaped his eating.'—**With thy treasure**. A coincidence with Job xx. 26a (see Heb. and R.V.)—**Who are full of sons**. Job felt the same difficulty (Job xxi. 8, 11).

15 **As for me**, &c. Worldlings forget the Giver in the gifts ('thy treasure'), and practically say, 'There is no God but pleasure.' As for me, who am called upon to 'serve God for nought,' what is my 'portion'? It is to 'see thy face in righteousness' (i.e. either 'recognised by Thee, the great Judge, as righteous,' or 'in accordance with Thy promise,' Isa. xlii. 6, xlv. 13)—mystic communion with God, begun in this life, and to be perfected **when I awake**. A phrase of much-disputed import. Does it mean 'on the morning of the resurrection'? This is possible, if the psalm be a Maccabean one; comp. Dan. xii. 1, Isa. xxvi. 19. But a vague allusion to so great and definite a hope is improbable; and in the Book of Job, with which this psalm is partly

parallel, the idea of waking from the sleep of Sheol is only mentioned to be dismissed (Job xiv. 12). 'On to-morrow's dawning'? Far too weak for a climax! 'After weeping has tarried for the night and gone on her way'? But there is no parallel for this interpretation. 'Every morning, when I awake'? Hermann Schultz has adopted this view; the 'image' or 'form' of God will then mean the apparition of the divine Champion of afflicted Israel.¹ But this requires the present instead of the cohortative; Schultz boldly renders 'erwache ich, sättige ich mich.' Only one explanation remains. 'When I awake' may mean 'when life's short day is past.' That life, when past, is a sleep, we find (perhaps) in another psalm (xc. 6); is it surprising that the correlative truth that death is an awaking out of sleep should meet us in a grand utterance like that before us? Is it not rather an image which mystics in all ages have claimed as their own?—**Thy face . . . thy form**. (Comp. xi. 7, xvi. 11.) On the latter expression, see below; it is only a synonym for 'thy face,' which is the proper expression in the early religious systems of Palestine for that aspect of the Divine Being which was turned towards and capable of being apprehended by man.² The Canaanitish Deity was in fact, not a triad, but a duad. The phrase 'the face of God' was retained by 'Moses and the prophets,' being a part of the received language of religious thought in those symbol-loving ages. 'The face of Jehovah' was therefore not a metaphorical phrase for His favour, derived from earthly courts. His 'face' was one aspect of Himself, was therefore personal (comp. xx. 1, Ex. xxxiii. 14, Isa. xxx. 27), and to 'see His face' was to receive from Himself intuitive revela-

¹ *Alttestamentliche Theologie*, ed. 2, pp. 600-2. But I regret the exegetical paradox on p. 601, n. 1.

² *Prophecies of Isaiah*, notes on Isa. i. 12, xxvi. 8; Ginsburg, *Moabite Stone*, p. 43. That the 'Face' of Jehovah was not a co-ordinate deity with Jehovah, entitles us perhaps to compare the worship of Assur, who 'stands by himself' and 'has no "face" or reflection' (Sayce, *Hibbert Lectures*, pp. 126, 127).

tions of His nature and character, so far as these concerned Israel and the individual Israelite; it was, in short, to 'know' Him. God as He is 'can no man see and live' (Ex. xxxiii. 20), but with a 'faithful servant' like Moses Jehovah 'will speak *mouth to mouth*,' and '*the form of Jehovah shall he behold*' (Num. xii. 8, R.V.) This softening of God's brightness in condescension to the weakness of Moses is a beautiful feature of the Yahvistic narrative,¹ and helps to prepare the way for the devotional use of the expression 'seeing God's face' in the Book of Psalms. Probably there was a parallel movement in Assyrian religion. In the Annals of Assurbanipal we read thus: 'Istar, who dwells in Arbela, entered, and right and left she was surrounded with glory.' It is indeed only a vision that is granted; but even in Israel the experience of Moses is said to be unique. The parallel is a real one, but stops short

where we most want it. That 'God is love,' is a truth which, as Hosea and the psalmists preached it, is peculiar to Israel. And without this truth, 'seeing the face of God' loses the tenderest part of its meaning. The sterner part of course remains; without God's love, His face is as a consuming fire (comp. on xi. 6). Nothing is gained by changing 'with thy form' into 'and thou wilt appear' (De Witt). 'Seeing thy form' expresses the *objective reality* of communion with God. Indeed, I do not myself think that more than this is claimed for Moses in the passage quoted above (Num. xii. 8). The case is different in Ex. xxiv. 10, which appears to state expressly that the sight of the God of Israel vouchsafed to the 'nobles' was such as under ordinary circumstances would have involved their destruction. The solemnity of the moment (we are probably intended to infer) was recognised by this unique privilege.

PSALM XVIII.

CLOVIS'S psalm² and John Wesley's (see on *v.* 2). A song of triumph, but with one or two touches of a milder sentiment. The critics agree in eulogising the skill of the poet, from Amyraut (the colleague of Louis Cappel), who calls it '*artis poeticae luculentissimum specimen*,' to Ewald, who points out the symmetry of its divisions. It is true that the poem falls at first sight into two *unequal* parts, viz. *vv.* 2-28 and *vv.* 29-51. But remove the four distichs numbered 25-28, and the number of distichs and tristichs in either part becomes very nearly equal, and approximate symmetry is, so far as I can see, all that the Hebrew poets usually aimed at. The first part is 'Davidic' in virtue of its style; the second may be thought to be so, in spite of the falling off in the style, in virtue of its regal and triumphant tone. An ancient belief in the integrity of the poem is guaranteed by its occurrence, not only in the Psalter, but in our second Book of Samuel (chap. xxii.), where it forms part of an appendix to the history of David. Besides this, Micah, or some prophet in the reign of Manasseh, alludes to *v.* 46 of our psalm (Mic. vii. 17), and Habakkuk in Jehoiakim's reign (if the ode in Hab. iii. be really his) seems to copy *v.* 34 (Hab. iii. 19). The imitative psalm in Jon. ii. is partly based on *vv.* 5-7. A wise man of the post-Exile period copies *v.* 31 (Prov. xxx. 5), and a very late psalmist adopts features from both parts of the psalm (see introd. to Ps. cxliv.) I cannot stay to speak here on the relation of our psalm to Deut. xxxii., with which it has some points of contact; but, without a long argument, I may safely assert that Ps. xviii. as a whole is not later than the reign of Hezekiah, whose reforms may be alluded to in *vv.* 21-

¹ Kautzsch, art. *Theophanie* in Herzog-Plitt's *Realencyclopädie*.

² Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, chap. xxxviii. (ed. 1855, iv. 358).

25, and that it was found in a collection of sacred lyrics, which also contained at any rate Ps. xxxvi. (compare the headings of the two psalms), by the second or final editor¹ of the Books or rather Book of Samuel.

There are some hard problems connected with the higher criticism and the exegesis of this psalm. For instance, is the poem the work of king David himself? Ewald thinks so, and the insertion of it in the closing part of 2 Samuel may seem to some to decide the point. Other critics (with whom I coincide) are content with affirming that the psalm was at least written with an eye to the life of David (comp. Perowne, *Psalms*, i. 6). On this and other points I may hope to speak elsewhere; on the question as to the relation of this recension of the psalm to that in 2 Sam. xxii. I must refer to the critical notes, though a condensed treatment of it is all that will be possible.

- 2 I will exalt thee, Jehovah my strength,
- 3 Jehovah my high crag and my fortress and my deliverer,
my God, my rock, whereon I take refuge,
my shield, and my horn of salvation, my sure retreat.
- 4 I call upon him who is to be praised, upon Jehovah,
and so am I saved from mine enemies.

- 5 The breakers of Death had come about me,
the rushing streams of perdition had affrighted me,
- 6 The cords of Sheól had surrounded me,
the snares of Death had surprised me.
- 7 In my strait I called upon Jehovah,
and cried for help unto my God :
he heard my voice out of his palace,
and my cry came into his ears.

- 8 Then the earth shook and quaked,
the foundations also of the hills trembled,
and shook violently, because he was wroth.
- 9 There went up smoke at his nostrils,
and fire out of his mouth devoured,
coals were set aflame therefrom :
- 10 And he bowed the heavens and came down
with a mass of clouds under his feet.

- 11 And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly
eagle-like upon the wings of the wind :
- 12 He made darkness his covert,
round about him as his bower,
cloud-masses, dark with water :
- 13 From the brightness before him there issued forth
hail-stones and coals of fire.

¹ See that useful book Kleinert's *Abriss der Einleitung zum A. T. in Tabellenform* (1878), p. 14, and compare Bleek and Wellhausen's *Einleitung*, p. 229.

- 14 And Jehovah thundered in the heavens,
and the Most High uttered his voice ;
- 15 And sent out his arrows and scattered them,
flashed forth lightnings in abundance and confounded them ;
- 16 And the channels of the sea were seen,
and the foundations of the world were laid bare,
at thy rebuke, Jehovah,
at the blast of the breath of thy nostrils.
- 17 He reached out from high heaven and took me,
he drew me out of many waters ;
- 18 He delivered me from my fierce enemy,
and from my haters, for they were too mighty for me ;
- 19 They confronted me in the day of my calamity,
but Jehovah became my stay ;
- 20 And he brought me forth into a broad place,
he rescued me, because he delighted in me.
- 21 Jehovah dealt with me according to mine innocence,
according to the purity of my hands he recompensed me,
- 22 Because I kept the ways of Jehovah,
and did not sin myself away from my God ;
- 23 For all his ordinances were before me,
and I did not put away his statutes from me ;
- 24 I was also without flaw towards him,
and I kept myself from guiltiness.
- 25 So Jehovah recompensed me according to my innocence,
according to the purity of my hands in his eyesight.
- 26 With the loving thou showest thyself loving,
with the flawless man thou showest thyself flawless ;
- 27 With him that purifies himself thou showest thyself pure,
and with the wayward thou showest thyself wayward.
- 28 For thou savest lowly people,
but haughty eyes thou dost abase.
- 29 For *thou* lightest my lamp,
Jehovah my God makes my darkness radiant.
- 30 For by thee I can break down a fence,
and by my God I can leap over a wall.
- 31 As for God, his way is flawless,
the promise of Jehovah is well-tried ;
he is a shield unto all that take refuge in him.
- 32 For who is God save Jehovah ?
or who is a Rock save our God ?

- 33 The God who girt me with strength,
and rendered my way flawless,
- 34 Who made my feet like hinds' feet,
and set me upon my high places,
- 35 Who trained my hands to war,
so that mine arms could bend a bow of bronze.
- 36 Yea, thou gavest me the shield of thy salvation ;
thy right hand held me up,
and thy lowliness made me great.
- 37 Thou madest for me a broad place to walk in,
that mine ankles did not waver.
- 38 I pursued mine enemies, and overtook them,
and turned not again till I had consumed them.
- 39 I dashed them to pieces that they could not rise,
but fell under my feet.
- 40 For thou didst gird me with strength for war,
thou didst bow down mine assailants under me.
- 41 Thou madest mine enemies turn their backs unto me,
and them that hated me I extinguished.
- 42 They cried, but there was none to save ;
unto Jehovah, but he answered them not.
- 43 I beat them small as the dust before the wind,
I emptied them out as the mire of the streets.
- 44 Thou didst win for me escape out of the strifes of peoples,
thou didst set me to be head of the nations ;
people whom I knew not did serve me.
- 45 At the hearing of the ear they were obsequious unto me,
aliens came cringing unto me.
- 46 The alien folk languished,
and came trembling out of their holds.
- 47 Jehovah lives, and blessed be my Rock,
and exalted be the God of my salvation ;
- 48 The God that gave me vengeance,
and subdued peoples under me,
- 49 That won for me escape from mine enemies,
yea, that set me on high above mine assailants,
that delivered me from the violent man.
- 50 Therefore will I give thanks unto thee, Jehovah, among the
nations,
and make melody unto thy name :
- 51 Great salvations gives he unto his king,
and shows lovingkindness unto his anointed,
to David and to his seed for evermore.

2 **I will exalt thee.** Comp. xxx. 2, cxlv. 1, Isa. xxv. 1. The received reading followed by A.V., and perhaps alluded to in Eccles. xlvii. 8 ('and loved him that made him'), is scarcely consistent with the context. Wesley's fine hymn (based on the German)—

Thee will I love, my strength, my tower,
&c.

shows what a lyric beginning 'I love thee' ought to be. See crit. note.

3 **My high crag, &c.** 'Great rock (or, mountain)'—*sadû rabû*—is a common title of Assur and Bel in Assyrian. A truly Palestinian image (cf. on *v.* 32).

5 'The waters of the underworld had broken in upon me.' He means the great river whose waters bathe the foundations of the world, and which bounds the vast city of the dead on every side.—

Breakers of Death (so 2 Sam. xxii. 5) is evidently the true reading; 'cords (of)' is a scribe's error (see opening of *v.* 6). 'Death' is a synonym for Sheól (the city of the dead), which was placed underneath the sea (cf. Job xxvi. 5, 6, Jon. ii. 3, 5, 6). Another name is **rushing streams of perdition** (Heb. *beliyya'al*), i.e. such as endangered my life. Sept., *χείμαρροι ἀνομίας*. But *χείμαρροι* is inappropriate in this connexion, and though 'Belial' (*beliyya'al*) usually (e.g. ci. 3) means that degree of evil which is without any 'soul of goodness,' it may also mean deadly ruin (as xli. 9). The word being parallel to Death and Sheól, the latter sense is preferable. Observe that the road is open to the personification of deadly ruin or perdition (Milton's word for Abaddon in lxxxviii. 12) as a prince of the demons; see 2 Cor. vi. 15, 16, where 'Christ' is parallel to 'light' as 'Belial' to 'darkness.' Compare Milton—

. . . hurl'd headlong down
To bottomless Perdition, there to dwell.

(*P. L.*, i. 45-47); also his phrase

'baleful streams' (*ibid.*, ii. 576), a possible alternative rendering

6 Death or Sheól (i.e. the prince of the underworld) is imagined as a hunter with cords and snares (cf. on xci. 3).

7 **Out of his palace**, i.e. the heavenly dwelling of Jehovah (see on xi. 4).—**Came into his ears.** So 2 Sam. xxii. 7. The additional words in the text are evidently a marginal explanation.

8 In 2 Sam. we read 'the foundations of the heavens,' but this unique (Job xxvi. 11 has 'the pillars of heaven') phrase is improbable in a description full of conventional expressions. A proof of the importance of the twofold form of the text.

9-13 Comp. l. 3, Isa. xxix. 6, lxiv. 1, and especially Ex. xix. 16, xx. 18. Let us imitate the frank simplicity of the writers, and enjoy this imaginative description. Our own anthropomorphism differs from that of the psalmist, but it is none the less real. We are therefore equally well able to analyse and to sympathise with his anthropomorphic language, and the sympathy must never be disjoined from the analysis. The description now before us is clearly based on traditional mythic pictures of the Heaven-god (heaven is in fact in *v.* 7 called Jehovah's 'palace'). When compared with parallel passages in the Old Testament and elsewhere, it shows that, in times still earlier than the psalmist's, the phenomena of the sky, now bright and cheerful, now dark and threatening, were ascribed to the action of mythic beings.¹ In short, this whole passage is a reflexion of an older mythology, and it is to this reflexion that the epic tinge which has been noticed in our psalm (see above) is due. If Israel had not been destined to be the vehicle of a spiritual revelation, there is no reason why it should not have produced a genuine epic poem.—**Upon a cherub.** We meet else-

¹ See Steinthal, 'The Legend of Samson,' sect. 10 (Goldziher's *Hebrew Mythology*, p. 420, &c.)

where with 'cherubim' (except indeed in Ezek. xxviii. 13-16), and Sept. gives ἐπι Χερουβιμ here. To the Hebrew poets they represent the more awful forces of nature, and the 'cherub' in this passage may almost be taken as an equivalent for the storm-cloud. The psalmist remembers the original meaning of the word just as the poet of the *Odyssey* (xx. 66, 77) still describes the mythic Harpies as θύελλαι. The root-meaning of 'cherub' seems to be, not 'covering' (as Goldziher thought), but 'greatness, power.'¹ See on xxii. 4.

—**And did fly eagle-like.** The Heb. has two verbs, one of which is the simple word for 'flying,' the other describes the peculiar hovering motion of birds of prey (Deut. xxviii. 49, Jer. xlvi. 40, xlix. 22). The 'cherub' was probably an eagle-winged animal, like the Assyrian steer-god, and imagined as the bearer as well as the attendant of the Deity. Comp. the 'throne-bearers' in the Assyrian Flood-story.² But apart from this, the eagle's wings formed part of the constant religious symbolism of the poets (e.g. Deut. xxxii. 11, Ps. xci. 4).—**On the wings of the wind.**

(Cf. Isa. xix. 1, but not Ps. lxviii. 34.) This may be a mythic phrase = 'on a cherub;' if so, the storm-wind will be meant. The Assyrian star-god is addressed (once) as 'begotten by the god Zu' (the divine storm-bird); see *Isaiah*, ii. 296. Or perhaps the phrase before us may merely mean 'swiftly as the wind;' there is a second mythology of the imagination.—

Cloud-masses, &c. A word for word rendering would fail to express the sense. See on lxxvii. 18.—**From the brightness before him, &c.** The 'brightness' is that of Jehovah's glory (as Ezek. x. 4), from which lightnings and hail 'issue forth' (with an impetus as of a flood or a hostile force, Isa. viii. 8,

Job xiii. 11, &c.) On the much-disputed text of this and the next verse see crit. note.

14, 15 The thunder is, semi-mythically, God's voice; hence Jehovah is said to 'roar.' 'After it (the lightning) a voice roars' (Job xxxvii. 4). So Ps. xxix. The lightnings are His arrows, as lxxvii. 18 and (in the parallel psalm of Habakkuk) Hab. iii. 9, 11.—**The Most High.** An ancient title suggesting at once God's exaltedness and His supremacy over the forces of the universe. See on vii. 18.

16 The effect of the earthquake (*v.* 8) on the seas is mentioned out of its place to smooth the transition to the figurative 'many waters.' Cf. civ. 7.—**The channels of the sea.** A vigorous expression found in 2 Sam., and rightly preferred by Street (1790), Ewald, Hitzig, Delitzsch, &c., to the Psalter-reading.

17 **He reached out, &c.**; comp. lvii. 4. 'The height' = heaven, as often, e.g. xciii. 4, Isa. xxxiii. 5, and especially Mic. vi. 6 ('the God of the height').—**He drew me, &c.** Luther paraphrases strikingly, 'He made a Moses of me,' since the word rendered 'drew out' (*māshā*) only occurs again in Ex. ii. 10. For this we might compare a plausible rendering of Isa. lxiii. 11a, and group this supposed allusion with other possible allusions in the context to passages in Exodus. But my judgment does not go with it.—**Many waters.** See introd., and comp. *v.* 5. The same image in lxxix. 2, 3 and elsewhere.

21 **Jehovah dealt with me, &c.** Legal righteousness is meant; see on vii. 9, xvii. 3, 4. If the view maintained in introd. be correct, the psalmist looks forward to a 'son (or, sons) of David,' in whom this description shall be verified. Yet he would hardly have written thus unless the actual king and people had made some visible progress towards 'righteousness.'

¹ Comp. Goldziher, *Hebrew Mythology*, pp. 196, 197; Lenormant, *Les origines*, &c. i. 118; Friedrich Delitzsch, *Wo lag das Paradies?* p. 115, and my own *Isaiah*, ii. 296-99.

² *Ass. guzalū*; see Haupt in Schrader's *K. A. T.*, p. 500.

Hezekiah's reformation would be such a step in advance. It fell indeed 'far short of giving full expression to the spirituality of prophetic teaching,'¹ but, as the first great visible result of prophetic activity in Judah, a fervent disciple of Isaiah may well have overrated. But, while overrating it, by faith he dimly imagined an obedience far more complete and flawless (*vv.* 23, 24). Delitzsch considers *vv.* 21-25 to be quite in harmony with David's language in 1 Sam. xxvi. 23^a, and the prophetic utterance respecting David in 1 Kings xiv. 8 (comp. 1 Kings xv. 5, xi. 4). But though this prophetic utterance contains a kernel of truth, yet in form it is an exaggeration, such as was natural to one who lived and wrote not earlier than the 'finding' of Deuteronomy. As to the 'language of David,' who shall guarantee that it was handed down at all by tradition?

22 Sin myself away from my God. One of those 'brief and suggestive phrases' spoken of by Müller in *Hebrew Syntax*, § 49, 1. I justify the English by 'drinking himself drunk' (1 Kings xvi. 9, A.V.), i.e. 'bringing himself by drinking into a state of drunkenness.' Or we might render, 'tear myself by sin from my God.'

23 Were before me . . . I did not put. Delitzsch, 'are before me . . . I do not put.' But this is not in harmony with his and my view of the context. It involves carrying the present tense throughout *vv.* 21-27 (so De Witt), and obscuring the whole picture. After the 'four central distichs,' however (see introd.), the present is natural.

24 From guiltiness. 'From mine iniquity' is a misleading rendering, as suggesting a reference to 'indwelling corruption' (so Hengst.). Geier paraphrases well, 'ne peccatum aliquod fieret meum.'

26 With the loving, &c. An impressive statement of the eternal tragedy of history (cf. 1 Sam. ii. 30, Prov. iii. 34). It implies the great idea of the covenant, which is in fact the main principle of Jehovah's government, so that another psalmist can say that His loving-kindness and truth are for such as keep His covenant (xxv. 10). The epithet 'loving' or 'kindly' (see on xii. 2) is only once again applied to Jehovah (cxlv. 17).

27 Showest thyself pure. Job complains of God for being hostile to him in secret (x. 13)—in short, not being 'pure' (in heart).—**With the wayward.** So the Wycliffite version of 1388 (Lat. *cum perverso*). God's 'waywardness' may be illustrated by Isa. xxviii. 21; it is his 'strange work.' His delight is to do good; His 'righteousness' is to bless those who are 'upright' towards Him; but 'if ye will walk contrary unto me, then will I also walk contrary unto you' (Lev. xxvi. 23, 24).

28 Lowly people. See on ix. 13, and comp. Zeph. iii. 12.

31 His way is flawless. So 'his work is flawless' in the great historical psalm called the Song of Moses (Deut. xxxii. 4).—**The promise,** &c. This and the next line recur in Prov. xxx. 5 (see introd.); comp. also xii. 7 (note).

32 Who is God . . . For 'God' 2 Sam. has El; the psalter, Eloah. The latter is the singular implied in the plural Elohim, and seems to have been revived,² or virtually formed, by the poets of the eighth century (see Deut. xxxii. 15, 17); it is specially frequent in the literature of the Chaldaean and later periods; see Hab. i. 11, Isa. xlv. 8 (the two isolated passages of pure prophecy), Hab. iii. 3,³ Prov. xxx. 5, Job (*passim*), Dan. xi. 37-39 (four times), Neh. ix. 17, Ps. l. 22, cxiv. 7, cxxxix. 19. The question,

¹ Robertson Smith, *The Prophets of Israel*, p. 364.

² Comp. Ewald, *Lehrbuch d. hebr. Sprache*, § 178 b; *Jahrbücher der bibl. Wiss.*, x. 10, n. 3.

³ I separate this passage from Hab. i. 11 as occurring in a poetical passage, and in one moreover which may, like the 'song of Hezekiah,' have been inserted long after the time of the chief writer of the book.

'Who is God,' &c., reminds us of 1 Sam. ii. 2, 2 Sam. vii. 22. Without denying the existence of the so-called gods (comp. Deut. xxxii. 17), it asserts that none is possessed of divine power. Comp. Baudissin, *Studien zur semit. Religionsgeschichte*, i. 72.—**A Rock.** So *v.* 47. An old phrase for God, more poetical than El (the strong one); comp. Deut. xxxii. (six times), Isa. xvii. 10, xxx. 29, xliv. 8. It reminds the student of the poor natural substratum of the spiritual religion of Israel, which must have included a 'fetishistic' stone-worship.

33 **My way**, i.e. my career.—**Flawless**, i.e. unspoiled by sins or blunders.

34 This verse is found again, with two variations, in Hab. iii. 19. The latter part nearly agrees with Deut. xxxii. 13 *a*; but the phraseology is familiar (see Am. iv. 13, Mic. i. 3, Isa. lviii. 14), so that there need not be indebtedness on either side.—**Like hinds' feet.** Swift-ness was a heroic quality (2 Sam. i. 23, ii. 18, 1 Chron. xii. 8; comp. on ix. 6).—**My high places**, i.e. those which I claim as mine by right, and which are the bulwarks of my power.

36 **Thy lowliness**, i.e. thy fellow-feeling with the lowly. The phrase is remarkable as applied to God, but the idea is the same as in cxiii. 5, 6, Isa. lvii. 15. Comp. Zech. ix. 9, where the ideal or Messianic king is described as not only a great conqueror, but 'lowly'

(is there an allusion to this in Matt. xi. 29?). In both passages there is an evident reference to the 'lowly' people whom Jehovah or His anointed delivers (comp. *v.* 28). A.V. gives the fine paraphrase 'thy gentleness'; comp. Dante's use of 'umile' in the sense of 'sweet' or 'gentle' (*Vita Nuova*, xxviii.; *Canzoniere*, ii. 1, 2). But this makes an insufficient contrast with 'made me great.' 2 Sam. has another reading—'thine answer' (viz. to prayer).

42 **Unto Jehovah.** Suggesting that the foes are Israelites. But this detail may be merely picturesque.

43 **I emptied them out.** 2 Sam. has, 'I trode them fine.'—**As the mire of the streets.** 'Dust' and 'mire' are again parallel in Zech. ix. 3. The sun-dried bricks of Eastern houses 'make the streets dusty when there is wind, and dirty when there is rain.' 'Upon a violent rain at Damascus,' says Maundrell, 'the whole city becomes, by the washing of the houses, as it were a quagmire.'¹

44 **Strifes of peoples.** See crit. note. The text has, 'strifes of the people' (or, as 2 Sam., 'of my people'), which might refer to civil wars (comp. *v.* 49); but the parallelism is against this.

51 The concluding tristich may well be a liturgical addition, although it agrees in rhythm with the rest of the psalm.

PSALM XIX.

Two of the distichs of part i. of this psalm are incomplete; but the sense is unaffected. *Vv.* 2-7 consist of 26 (or, shall we say, 28) lines, each with four tones; *vv.* 8-15 of fourteen five-toned lines. This variety of rhythm of itself suggests a diversity of origin for the two parts.² *Vv.* 2-7 have probably been taken from a longer psalm, since *v.* 6 does not form a suitable close. It is only by an afterthought that the two parts of the psalm have been brought into relation, the sun being regarded as a type of the law of God. (Comp. Kant's deep saying on the two great themes of perennial wonder, the starry sky and the moral law.) The first part is

¹ Harmer, *Observations on Divers Passages of Scripture* (1776), vol. i. p. 176.

² We shall meet with this phenomenon repeatedly. So in Assyrio-Babylonian hymnology, poems originally separate were joined together by editors.

obviously the finer ; but the second shows a great development of the conscience ; as St. Paul says, *διὰ νόμου ἐπίγνωσις ἀμαρτίας* (Rom. iii. 20). Clearly the Scriptures are now the great source of spiritual life (comp. Ps. i., cxix., and see on xii. 7) ; notice the six different designations given to them. *Regenerate Israel* began to find in these books, or in this book, his truest home. Pressure from without contributed to this result, for (see *v.* 14) it was a time of great danger from heathenism.

2 The heavens recount the glory of God,
and the firmament declares his handiwork.

3 Day unto day is a well-spring of speech,
and night unto night shows forth knowledge ;

v. 4 lacking
5. 4 Their voice has gone out through the whole earth,
and their words unto the end of the world ;

* * * * *

for the sun has he set a pavilion in them ;

6 And he is like a bridegroom going forth from his chamber,
and rejoices hero-like to speed on his path ;

7 From one end of the heavens is his going forth,
and his circuit unto the ends thereof,

* * * * *

and there is nothing hidden from his heat.

(Fragment of another Psalm.)

8 The law of Jehovah is perfect, | restoring the soul,
the testimony of Jehovah is faithful, | making wise the simple ;

9 The behests of Jehovah are right, | rejoicing the heart ;
the commandment of Jehovah is pure, | enlightening the eyes ;

10 The fear of Jehovah is pure, | abiding for ever ;
the ordinances of Jehovah are truthful, | and righteous altogether.

11 More to be desired are they than gold, | yea, than much fine gold,
sweeter also than honey | or the droppings of the comb.

12 Moreover thy servant gets warning by them ; | in the observance
of them is great reward. *selfish!*

13 Lapses—who discerns them ? | from unknown (faults) absolve thou
me.

14 Hold back thy servant also from the proud, | let them not rule
over me :

then shall I be blameless, | and absolved from great transgression.

15 Accepted be the words of my mouth | and the musing of my heart
before thee, Jehovah, continually, | my rock and my redeemer.

2 The divine name here used is El, i.e. God outside his relations to Israel, God the Strong One. The wonders of the sky especially en-

gaged the attention of the author or authors of Job ; see the question in Job xxxvii. 18. Did our psalmist live equally late ?

v. 4 there is no word the
no speech, without
voice (sound) be
hear

3 **Day unto day, &c.** Every day the heavens renew their testimony to God's glory. This is the sense. The form, however, is semi-mythical. The days were regarded in primitive times as having an independent, quasi-personal existence (Job iii. 1-10). Comp. Emerson—

Daughters of Time, the hypoeritic Days.

3-5 A fourth verse is given in the Hebrew text, which is variously rendered, 'It is not a speech, neither are they words, the voice whereof cannot be heard' (so Sept., Targ., Vulg., followed by Vittinga, Hitzig, and Delitzsch), and 'Without speech and without words; not heard is their voice' (Hengst., Hupfeld, Ewald, Perowne, Kay, De Witt). The latter rendering is the more plausible, but involves a direct contradiction of *v.* 2 ('speech without speech'). But no explanation removes the prosaic character of the distich, which has this further peculiarity, that it is not composed of regular four-toned lines like the rest of the psalm. It must be a gloss, i.e. a marginal note for dull readers which has intruded into the text. Of course, though poorly expressed, it is in substance correct. Comp. Plutarch, *On Isis and Osiris*, c. lxxv., 'For the Divine Reason stands not in need of voice, but walking along a silent path and rule, guides mortal affairs according to justice.' It also confirms the reading 'their voice' in *v.* 5. How much the brilliant psalm-fragment gains by its omission!

—**Their voice**, i.e. either that of the heavens, or of day and night. Louis Cappel's sharp-sighted emendation. The text-reading is generally rendered, 'Their line,' i.e. their dominion (Hengst., Hupfeld, Delitzsch); but the older interpretation (Sept., Symm., Jerome) is 'their sound,' a paraphrase upon the (questionable) literal rendering 'their string:' comp. *τόνος*. So

Ewald. Hitzig, on the other hand, 'They span the whole earth with a chain of praise.' This is better than the 'Æolian harp theory,' but lacks proof. On St. Paul's Haggadic use of this verse, see Briggs, *Biblical Study*, p. 316.—**In them**, i.e. in the heavens. Hitzig, less probably, 'where' (i.e. at the end of the world; the plural pronoun, as in Isa. xxx. 6, to express the neuter). If the psalmist were recording a myth, he would place the sun's tent, not in heaven, but in the underworld. Comp. introd. to Ps. xxiv.

6 **Like a bridegroom.** A primitive solar myth has died down into a metaphor (see on cxxxix. 9). Comp. *Rig Veda*, ix. 86, 32 (of the setting sun), 'The husband of the wives approaches the end.'¹ A bridegroom is the symbol of youthful vigour; comp. *Pirké Aboth*, v. 21 (Strack, p. 45), 'He who is eighteen years old is (ripe) for the *khuppah*.' The sun is masculine in Hebrew (generally), Aramaic, and Assyrian, feminine in Arabic.—**From his chamber.** Strictly, 'from his alcove' (not 'canopy,' as De Witt, in accordance with the later Jewish custom). From Joel ii. 16 we may infer that the *khuppah* (rendered 'alcove,' and I say, not on etymological grounds) was a part of the nuptial chamber curtained off for the bride, and probably a survival of the wife's separate tent² (comp. Gen. xxiv. 67).—**Hero-like, &c.** Another mythic corruption—that of the sun as a warrior (comp. again introd. to Ps. xxiv.) His 'swiftness' reminds us of the picture of the ideal warrior in xviii. 34; 'horses of the sun' (reminding us of Aryan mythologies) are mentioned in 2 Kings xxiii. 11. See *Paradise Lost*, vii. 372, where the myth is still further attenuated.

8 **The law of Jehovah**, i.e. probably the Pentateuch, and the prophetic-historical and strictly prophetic writings (see on i. 2). Observe that at this point Jehovah

¹ Max Müller, *Lectures on the Science of Language*, ii. 513.

² Robertson Smith, *Kinship in Arabia*, p. 168.

(Yahvè) takes the place of El (*v.* 1).
— **Restoring the soul**; see on xxiii. 3.

10 **The fear of Jehovah**, i.e. the religion regulated by the sacred books. The context obliges us so to define it.—**Pure** (comp. xii. 7), i.e. without the moral defilements of all merely natural religions.—**Truthful**, because based on the *eternal* laws of morality.—**Righteous altogether**. Is this an echo of Deut. iv. 8, or is the reverse the case?

12 **Thy servant**, i.e. either Israel (comp. Jer. xxx. 10, xlvi. 27, 28, 'my servant' Jacob, and 'the Second Isaiah') or a representative Israelite. So xxvii. 9, xxxi. 17, lxix. 18, lxxxvi. 2, 16, lxxxix. 40, cxvi. 16, cxix. 125, cxliii. 12.

13 **Lapses**, i.e. errors due to ignorance or inattention (Lev. iv. 5,

Num. xv. 22). Note the *εὐλάβεια*, the scrupulous conscientiousness, of the writer, a characteristic in which the Jew more reminds us of the Roman than of the Greek.

14 **Hold back . . . from the proud**. Less probably (see crit. note), 'from presumptuous (sins),' called 'sins with a high hand' in Num. xv. 30. The difficulties in keeping the Law were of two kinds. Within, there was the fear of one's own infirmities, a fear intensified by the manifoldness of the precepts of the Law. Without, there was the fear of the 'proud men,' so often mentioned in Ps. cxix., viz. the paganising upper classes. We cannot be sure whether the writer actually lived under heathen rule (comp. cxix. 133-4, cxxv. 3).—**Great transgression**, or, 'the great revolt' (viz. to heathenism).

PSALM XX.

THIS, like its companion-psalm, seems intended for liturgical use. The people had been called together to take part in a sacrifice, on the occasion of the king's going forth to battle. *Vv.* 2-6 may be assigned to the people, *vv.* 7-9 to some priest or prophet who declares God's acceptance of the sacrifice, and *v.* 10 again to the people (as chorus). These are Ewald's very probable inferences. At this point I must leave him: I do not see why king Asa should be referred to. The style is simple and flowing; the ideas popular but pure from superstition. Israel is inferior in physical strength to its enemy, but is compensated by its faith.

- 2 Jehovah answer thee in the day of trouble ;
the name of the God of Jacob be thy sure retreat ;
- 3 Send thee help from the sanctuary,
and uphold thee from out of Zion ;
- 4 Remember all thine offerings,
and find thy burnt sacrifice fat ;
- 5 Grant thee according to thy heart,
and fulfil all thy purpose !
- 6 We would shout for joy at thy salvation,
and exult for the name of our God ;
Jehovah fulfil all thy petitions !
- 7 Now am I sure that Jehovah saveth his anointed,
he will answer him from his holy heaven
with the mighty saving acts of his right hand.
- 8 Some (boast) of chariots, and some of horses,
but we will boast of the name of our God.

- 9 They must stoop and fall,
whilst we arise and stand erect.
10 O Jehovah, save the king,
and answer us when we call.

2 **The name**, &c. Precisely as Prov. xviii. 10. The 'Name of Jehovah' is one of those symbolic phrases which are capable of indefinite expansion. To many of the people it may have had a very simple meaning (victory, for instance; see *v.* 6); to the disciples of the prophets its signification was complex and deep (see on Isa. xxvi. 8, xxx. 27, lxiii. 9), in all which passages Jehovah and Jehovah's Name are all but synonymous.

4 **Find . . . fat**, i.e. accept. Comp. Gen. viii. 21, 'And Jehovah smelled a sweet savour.'

6 **At thy salvation**, i.e. at thy success in warfare (as 2 Sam. xix. 2). Victory is counted upon as the gift of Jehovah (see on iii. 3).—**Exult**. Comp. xxi. 2. The text-reading is supposed to mean 'wave the banner;' but see crit. note.

7 **Now am I sure**, &c. A sacrifice has probably just been offered to make the war a 'holy war' (see 1 Sam. xiii. 9, and comp. my note on Isa. xiii. 3).

8 **Some (boast)**, &c. The heathen enemy is probably referred to; see Isa. xxxvi. 8, xxxvii. 24, and cf. Isa. xxxi. 1, Deut. xvii. 16.

9 **They must stoop**, &c. In the Hebrew, the perfect of prophetic confidence. It is evidently implied that Israel is now weak (comp. cxlvi. 9).

10 **Save the king**. 'Save' = give victory. The absolute use of 'the king' for God in the received text is without parallel. The correction is dictated by the rhythm (the lines are four-toned); it involves a further correction in line 2 ('and answer').

PSALM XXI.

ANOTHER liturgical hymn; *vv.* 2-8 may be assigned to the people, *vv.* 9-13 to a priest, and *v.* 14 again to the people (Ewald). We might naturally infer from *vv.* 2 and 3 (comp. xx. 6, 5) that this psalm commemorates the victory prayed for in Ps. xx.; *vv.* 4, 5 equally suggest a coronation-feast or birthday; lastly, *vv.* 9-14 seem prompted by the expectation of renewed hostilities. It is not accurate, therefore, to describe our psalm as a pæan for the victory prayed for in Ps. xx., nor yet as a poem on the royal birthday (Ewald). The tone adopted towards the king reminds us of expressions in the Assyrian royal psalms, e.g. 'Distant days, everlasting years, a strong weapon, a long life, many days of honour, supremacy among the kings, grant to the king, the Lord, who made this offering to his gods.'¹ It was natural, as long as the O.T. was studied without reference to its roots in Orientalism, to think that *vv.* 5-7 could only be explained of the Messiah of the future (see Rashi and Kimchi); but the exalted language of Hebrew writers with reference to their kings is now perfectly explicable by the popular belief in kings as reflections of the divinity (cf. 'Let the king live for ever'). To this view we are led by a comparison of the still more exalted language of Assyrian and Egyptian writers. I do not say that the gulf between the king and his subjects was as great in the land of Israel as in Egypt or even in Assyria; but the distinction existed, though in a less marked form. These remarks of course also apply to Ps. xlv. (where see notes). Has the psalm a meaning for Christians? Yes. That all blessings come from above, and that evil must sooner or later be de-

¹ *Die Höllenfahrt der Istar*, p. 73; comp. Sayce, *Hibbert Lectures*, pp. 35-67.

stroyed, are Christian ideas ; and besides this, the peculiar Orientalisms of *vv.* 5, 6 furnished the moulds in which the highest and most distinctively Christian sentiment naturally ran at the time when Christian phra-seology was fixed. The stern predictions in *vv.* 9-11 belong of course to a lower level of feeling than that on which the heroes of revealed religion, so far as they are true to their message, move.

- 2 Jehovah ! for thy strength the king is glad ;
and for thy salvation how greatly doth he exult !
- 3 The desire of his heart hast thou given him,
and the request of his lips hast thou not withheld.
- 4 For thou meetest him with richest blessings,
thou settest on his head a crown of fine gold.
- 5 He asked life of thee—thou gavest it him,
even length of days for ever and ever.
- 6 His honour is great through thy salvation,
glory and grandeur thou layest upon him.
- 7 For thou makest him most blessed for ever,
thou cheerest him with joy near thy face.
- 8 For the king trusts in Jehovah,
and through the lovingkindness of the Most High he shall
remain unmoved.
- 9 Thy hand shall reach all thine enemies,
thy right hand shall reach them that hate thee.
- 10 Thou shalt make them as a fiery oven when thou showest thy face,
Jehovah shall swallow them up in his wrath, and fire shall
devour them :
- 11 Their fruit shalt thou destroy from the earth,
and their seed from among the children of men.
- 12 For though they cause evil to impend over thee,
and plan a wicked device—they will perform nothing ;
- 13 For thou wilt make them turn their backs,
with thy bowstrings thou wilt aim against their faces.
- 14 Exalt thyself, Jehovah, in thy strength ;
we will sing and make melody to thy might.

2 **For thy strength**, i.e. for thy protection (lxxxvi. 16).

4 *b*, 5 Some would explain *v.* 4 *b* by 2 Sam. xii. 30, and *v.* 5 by Isa. xxxviii. 5. How prosaic ! On *v.* 5, see the quotation above ; on *v.* 4 *b* (where the king's own crown is meant), cf. line 2 of the inscription

of Yehawmelek, king of Gebal, 'us (or, me) whom the lady the Baalath of Gebal hath set, a royal race, over Gebal.'—**Forever and ever.** Comp. xlv. 3, lxi. 7. This is of course not an assertion of non-mortality. We might even weaken it into 'long life.' But probably a special 'golden

mansion¹ was believed to be in store for worthy kings in heaven (called in Schrader's royal psalm 'the land of the silver sky'²); see my note on Isa. xiv. 13, 14. Besides the quotation in introduction and the phrase 'let the king live for ever' (Dan. ii. 4), comp. l. 9 of Yehawmelek's inscription, 'May she preserve his life, may she lengthen his days and his years over Gebal, for he is a just king.' 'Æternitas' too was a title of the Roman emperors. 'Rogatus per æternitatem tuam, ut,' &c., Plin. *Ep.* x. 87 (to Trajan).

6 The royal majesty is described as a reflexion of the divine (see civ. 1, 31). So xlv. 4.

7 **Most blessed.** Lit., 'blessings' (comp. Isa. xxvi. 18), i.e., as in J. Montgomery's hymn, 'all-blessing and all-blessed.'—**Near thy face.** So cxl. 15. The king is regarded as seated at Jehovah's right hand, where is 'fulness of joys' (xvi. 11).

9-13 The king is addressed (not Jehovah, as Hupfeld); see especially *vv.* 8 and 10. Glowing but unpurified anticipations, which contrast with the calm and dignified tone of xx. 2, 3.

10 **When thou showest thy face.** Lit., 'at the time of thy face.' 'Face' here is a symbolic or semi-mythic phrase for 'divine manifestation' (whether for good, see on xvii. 15, or for evil, see on ix. 4). The actions of the king are identified with those of the heavenly king (see next line).—**Swallow them up,** i.e. make them as though they had not been. Comp. Isa. iii. 12, xxv. 7, 8.

11 **Their fruit.** Comp. the last line of the inscription of Eshmunazar, king of Sidon, 'and the man shall be slain and his seed for ever.'

14 **Exalt thyself,** i.e. exercise thy supernatural power and authority (as xlvi. 11, lvii.)

PSALM XXII.

AN appeal for help from the depths of affliction, followed by a joyous announcement of the answer vouchsafed, and prophecies of its far-reaching effects, in which all nations, and (in what sense, will have to be examined) even the departed, shall share. An appeal, but *from whom?* To be consistent I ought to reserve my answer for another place; but most of my readers will agree that Ps. xxii. is an exceptional psalm. From whom, then, does the appeal come? From some one of those great men who tower like mountain-peaks above the low average attainments of Israel—from David, Jeremiah, or even the Christian Messiah Himself? David? The David of history? or even (if I may say so) the writer of Ps. xviii.? But is there anyone so prosaic as to maintain that any scene in the great king's life explains and justifies such terrors and such complaints? Jeremiah (so Hitzig), or at least 'an eminent leader of the theocratic church' (so Orelli³)? But we must look at the psalm as a whole, and of the latter part Jeremiah himself would have been the first to declare that it soared

¹ Comp. Theocritus, xvii. 15, 16 (Lang), 'Him (Philadelphus) hath the Father established in the same honour as the blessed immortals, and for him a golden mansion in the house of Zeus is builded.' Mr. Lang well remarks that there is a strong tinge of Egyptian sentiment in this Greek hymn.

² The bright, changeless region of the upper heaven is of course meant. Comp. Sayce, *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 190.

³ Orelli's solution of the problem of authorship (*Old Testament Prophecy*, p. 174) is not very different from Hitzig's. But we have a right to ask who this 'eminent leader, banished or a prisoner,' of the 'next age' (to David) can have been. The case is very different from that of the second part of Isaiah. We know next to nothing of the history and biography of the Exile-period, and cannot be bound to suggest a name for the author of that prophecy. But we know much of the 'leaders' of the germinal Church in the regal period, and cannot allow Orelli to put us off so easily. He virtually almost assumes a Christophany before Christ.

far above his spiritual atmosphere. That the psalmist was influenced by Jeremiah is a more reasonable inference from parallelisms of expression than that he was Jeremiah himself. The Christian Messiah? Many parts truly are applicable to Jesus, as few perhaps will deny, but Theodore of Mopsuestia and Calvin have already pointed out¹ how inapplicable are some of the most striking expressions. David and Christ conjointly? This is the so-called typical-Messianic theory, which dates from the same Theodore (see on *v.* 2), and has been held by many from Calvin and Amyraud to Tholuck, Stier, and Delitzsch. Nothing but the fear of lowering the credit of the New Testament (a book so little understood by those who undervalue Jewish lore) could have suggested a view so subversive of the laws of psychology. 'How David could extend his own consciousness to that of his offspring, cannot be conceived, without confusion of the soul-life and destruction of personal identity.'²

Is it then a personification of the exiled Jewish people that we have before us? So De Wette (originally), following Rashi and Kimchi. But the sufferer, though he speaks partly as the mouthpiece of Israel (see on *v.* 5), yet distinguishes himself from the people to which he belongs (*vv.* 23, 24, 26), and the entire description is in the highest degree individualised. More defensible is the view of Olshausen, who explains the psalm as a record of the religious differences of the Maccabean age (comp. *v.* 9 with *lv.* 23). And certainly that the religious differences of the Exile or post-Exile period (or both) have contributed ideas to the mental stock of the psalmist, must at any rate be acknowledged. The nobler spirits of the Jewish people did, from the Exile onwards, form a church within the nation, and did both strengthen and justify the belief in an ideal Israel of the future. But, as the Israel of the past, so the greater Israel of the future needed a Moses (comp. *Isa.* lxxiii. 11). Here I must check my pen, not to repeat what I have said in Essays II. and V. of *The Prophecies of Isaiah*, vol. ii. (ed. 3).

To be brief. Ps. xxii. is most probably a description, under the form of a dramatic monologue, of the ideal Israelite, called by a kindred writer 'the covenant of the people,' and 'the light of the nations' (*Isa.* xlii. 7), who shall rise out of the provisional church-nation, and, identifying himself with it, lead it on to spiritual victory. This view includes the essence at least of Olshausen's, but goes beyond it. The speaker is an individual who might also be surnamed 'Israel,' for he is the flower of Israel. The foes who have reduced him to such straits are not merely 'those of his own household' (comp. *lxix.* 9), but the heathen as well (see on *vv.* 7, 22). His victory will be the final reunion of the human race. Ewald is on the road to this view when he gives up the 'collective' theory of the 'Servant of Yahvè' in *Isa.* liii., and substitutes a view which, to be consistent, he should have extended to Ps. xxii.³ The 'Servant,' as explained by him, on the analogy of the 'Wisdom' of *Prov.* viii., is a poetical impersonation (suggested, however, by the life and death of some martyr-prophet) of the nobler and spiritually more aspiring side of Israel's character. This seems too weak an explanation, whether of the 'Servant' or of the speaker of Ps. xxii. The ancient Orientals were ideal-realists, and did not, with an English poet, seek in poetry 'an ever surer and surer stay' than the facts

¹ Kihn, *Theodor von Mopsuestia*, p. 161; Calvin, *Comm.*, on *v.* 2.

² Hengstenberg, *Commentary on the Psalms*, E. T., i. 363.

³ In his work on the Psalms, Ewald describes our psalmist as 'presumably a very important person,' who lived at the very beginning of the Exile, before the destruction of the Temple, and whose fearless confession of his faith drew upon him the most bitter persecution. Though in danger of death he 'painfully rescues himself from despair,' and believes in spite of appearances that he will not only himself be delivered but that wondrous consequences will proceed from his deliverance.

of religion. A Hebrew writer, not less (comp. Renouf's *Hibbert Lectures*) than an Egyptian, believed in the fact of the supersensible life of ideals like Wisdom and the national Genius. When, therefore, a psalmist or a prophet, in the circumstances of the Babylonian period, portrays this 'Genius' in the colours of human life, is it not reasonable to go further than Ewald, and see a presentiment of an 'Israelite indeed,' in word and in act, in life and in death, rivalling and surpassing the Israel and Moses of antiquity? This view enables us to combine the elements of truth in other solutions of the problem. I do not, however, attempt even an imperfect criticism of Christian and Jewish interpretations of this and similar psalms, because this would interfere with that immediateness of impression which it is my perhaps too bold hope to produce in the reader. But the presentiment of an ideal Israelite and second Moses is not the only spiritual acquisition of this unnamed writer. As the Jewish scholar Castelli has well pointed out, the psalmist's great idea of the denationalising of religion is justification enough for calling the psalm Messianic (*// Messia*, p. 69).

It is important to compare Ps. xxii. with other similar psalms, some of which may be adequately explained as utterances of pious Israel, while others (as xxxv., I hesitate to add lxix.) seem to have a fuller significance. In general, too, the parallel passages referred to should be carefully studied in reading this psalm. We are evidently in the midst of saintly and unambitious writers, deeply exercised by the ways of God with their nation, and zealous and admiring students of Israel's best religious literature. The date I may at present leave open; readers of vol. ii. of *Isaiah* will, however, divine my opinion and its grounds. The poem falls almost entirely into strophes of eight lines of trimeters. If the text were free from corruption (see crit. notes), we might be able to carry this division all through the psalm.

- 2 My God, my God, [hearken unto me ;]
 why hast thou forsaken me ?
 far off [art thou] from my salvation,
 from the words in which I roar, my God.
- 3 I cry by day, and thou answerest not,
 by night also, and get no respite :
- 4 But thou art the Holy One,
 enthroned upon the praises of Israel.
- 5 In thee did our fathers trust,
 they trusted, and thou didst deliver them ;
- 6 Unto thee they cried, and made their escape :
 in thee did they trust, and they were not shamed,
- 7 But I am a worm and no man,
 a reproach of men and despised of people.
- 8 All that see me make a mock at me,
 they open wide the lips, they shake the head.
- 9 ' He has rolled (his cares) upon Jehovah ; let him deliver him ;
 let him rescue him, since he delights in him.'
- 10 Yea, but thou art he that drew me out of the womb,
 thou didst make me to trust upon my mother's breasts.

- 11 Upon thee was I cast from the birth,
thou art my God from my mother's womb.
- 12 Be not far from me, for trouble is near,
for there is none to help.
- 13 Many bulls have come about me,
strong ones of Bashan have encompassed me.
- 14 They gape upon me with their mouths,
(as) a ravening and roaring lion.
- 15 I am poured out like water,
and all my bones are out of joint ;
my heart hath become like wax,
molten in the midst of my bowels.
- 16 My palate is dried up like a potsherd,
and my tongue cleaves to my gums,
and thou layest me in the dust of Death.
- 17 For dogs have come about me,
the crew of evil-doers have closed me round ;
they have digged into my hands and my feet.
- 18 I can number all my bones,
while these—with delight they gaze upon me.
- 19 They part my garments among them,
and cast lots upon my vesture :
- 20 But thou, Jehovah, be not thou far off ;
O my strength, speed to my help.
- 21 Deliver my soul from the sword,
my dear life from the power of the dog.
- 22 Save me from the lion's mouth,—
yea, from the horns of the wild oxen—thou hast (already)
answered me.
- 23 I would fain rehearse thy name unto my brethren,
in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.
- 24 'Ye that fear Jehovah, praise him ;
all ye seed of Jacob, glorify him ;
and stand in awe of him, all ye seed of Israel :
- 25 For he has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted,
neither has he hid his face from him,
but when he cried, he hearkened unto him.'
- 26 From thee is my praise in the great congregation,
my vows will I pay in the presence of them that fear him.
- 27 The afflicted shall eat and be satisfied ;
they that inquire after Jehovah shall praise him ;
let your heart revive for ever !

- 28 All the ends of the earth shall remember and return unto Jehovah,
and all the families of the nations shall bow down before him.
- 29 For the kingdom is Jehovah's,
and he is ruler among the nations.
- 30 All the fat ones of the earth shall surely bow down unto him,
all that have gone down into the dust shall bend the knee before
him,
- 31 And as for him that kept not his soul alive,
his seed shall be reckoned unto Jehovah ;
- 32 To the next generation they shall rehearse his righteousness,
to a people that shall be born, that he hath done nobly.

2 Mrs. Browning has well caught the parallelism between this verse and Isa. xlix. 14. The two passages combined have inspired her touching poem, 'Cowper's Grave.' The second member of *v.* 2 in the Hebrew is very difficult in spite of the easiness of the context. The stanza, moreover, is too short. Some such filling out as Bickell has suggested seems necessary (see crit. note).—**My God.** Heb. *Eli*, not *Elohai*. The shortest name for God (*EI*) best suits the agonised speaker. So again *v.* 11. Comp. on xlii. 3.—**In which I roar.** Lit., 'of my roaring.' The same figure as in xxxii. 3, xxxviii. 9. Theodore of Mopsuestia's comment is too characteristic to be withheld (see introd.), *ἐνταῦθα μέντοι ὁ θεῖος Δαβὶδ καὶ τὴν εἰς αὐτὸν γεγενημένην ἀδικίαν διδάσκει, καὶ τὴν εἰς τὸν Δεσπότην ἐσομένην προδιαγράφει, τῇ κοινωσίᾳ τῶν παθημάτων ἐναβρυνόμενος καὶ μονοουχίβοῶν μετὰ σώματι μου βαστάζω* (Migne, *Synes. et Theod.* col. 678).

3 **And get no respite** (lit., no silence, rest). Understand, from the griefs which find expression in my tears. Comp. Jer. xiv. 17.

4 **The Holy One.** Heb. *Qādōsh*, used in the manner of proper names, as xcix. 3, 5 (comp. on Isa. xl. 25). Why is 'holiness' here referred to? Certainly not in the ethical sense of the word. But, as Vatke remarks, it would be a great mistake to find in the phrase or name 'the Holy

One' nothing but 'numen venerandum.'¹ The Holy One is recognised as such by His judgments, by the destruction of sinners and the deliverance of His faithful servants in righteous accordance with the plan summed up in the technical phrase 'the covenant.' Comp. Isa. v. 16, xxix. 23, lii. 10. Jehovah, being 'holy,' i.e., primarily, separate from all creaturely weakness, and next sacrosanct, inviolable, has the power, and being 'Israel's Holy One,' has also the will, to interpose for His people. How is it then (comp. Isa. xlix. 14) that Jehovah has become deaf to the complaint of Israel's representative?—**Enthroned upon,** &c. The 'praises of Israel' are like the wings of the cherubim on which Jehovah is enthroned. Thus the phrase is an adaptation of the title 'who dwells upon the cherubim' (lxxx. 2, xcix. 1). The cherubim, as we have seen (on xviii. 11), are at once the bearers and the guards or attendants of the Deity; an old mythic form of expression retained for its symbolic usefulness by the sacred poets. Jehovah's throne was a throne of clouds (xviii. 10, xcvii. 2), symbolised by the cherubim. The clouds themselves are, however, to the psalmists merely the representatives of the obscure forces of nature. Another view of the expression, 'who dwells upon the cherubim,' brings it into connexion with the cherubim of the sanctuary. Riehm,

¹ *Die Religion des Alten Testaments*, i. (1835), p. 475, n. 2.

for instance, thinks it meant that Jehovah, as manifested in the temple, was altogether inclosed by the cherubs and their wings. He renders 'who inhabits the cherubim,' which equally well suits the account of the cherubim in 1 Kings vi. 23-27 and that in Ex. xxv. 18-22 (the priestly legislation). The phrase will then mean 'who dwells in the midst of His people, as their protector.' But the first explanation is preferable. The semi-mythic view of the cherubim pervades the Old Testament; and wherever we find this phrase, in Isa. xxxvii. 16, as well as in Ps. lxxx. 2, xcix. 1, it clearly describes Jehovah, *not as the God of Israel, but as the master of the forces of the universe.* Now see how exquisitely the poet glorifies the old mythic phrase. The true cherubim are the praises of God's people for His wondrous works. He is not merely a God of force, but a God of praise-producing lovingkindness. It is another form of the same idea, when another psalmist calls Righteousness 'the base of His throne' (xcvii. 2).

5 Our fathers. The phrase suggests the idea that the speaker is a personification of Israel (so Lagarde, *Orientalia*, ii. 63). I prefer to say that the speaker is the mouthpiece of the Church of which he is the leader. See introd.

7 A worm and no man. Comp. Isa. xli. 14 (of Israel, oppressed by the heathen), lii. 14, liii. 2 (of Israel, or Israel's leader?)—**Despised of people.** Comp. Isa. liii. 3 and especially xlix. 7 (of the individualised 'Servant'). The 'people' referred to are all those with whom the speaker has to do, in so far as they obstruct his religious mission, whether Jews or Gentiles.

8 They shake the head. So xxxi. 12, xliv. 14, cix. 25, Lam. ii. 15.

9 He has rolled, &c. An unusual phrase, perhaps from the common speech. So in a more complete form in xxxvii. 5, Rev. xvi. 3. Others render in the imperative, 'Roll it' (as if an ironical counsel), rather unnaturally in this

context, and against the ancient versions, though the pointers understood thus, thinking of xxxvii. 5.

10 That drew me out of the womb. So lxxi. 6 (see crit. note). If the speaker be the pious Israel personified, we may compare Isa. xlviii. 8, 'Rebellious from the womb.'

13, 14 Observe (1) how frequently the Hebrew writers identify Israel's enemies with wild beasts (*θήρια ἀνθρωπόμορφα*, Ignat. ad Smyrn. 4; cf. 1 Cor. xv. 32). They could not see any great moral gap between the human and non-human races, and put the former too low and the latter too high (cf. Jon. iii. 7). Could they have judged otherwise in those early ages, when man still acted so much by impulse? See on xxxvi. 7, and comp. introd. to Ps. xlix. There are exceptions, however; see viii. 6, cxlix. 14. And (2) the carefully varied imagery—a herd of Bashan bulls (comp. Ezek. xxxix. 18, Am. iv. 1), a single, stately lion (so *v.* 22 *a*; comp. Isa. xv. 9, R.V.) Note, 'abbirim, 'strong ones' = bulls (as l. 13, lxviii. 31). In Jer. viii. 16, xlvii. 3, l. 11 for horses; in Ps. lxxviii. 25 for angels.

15 Cf. Isa. xiii. 7, 'Therefore shall all hands be slack, and every heart of man shall melt;' also Josh. vii. 5.

16-18 To understand this strophe, comp. cii. 5, 6. Both passages mean the same thing, viz. that distress and anxiety have reduced the body of the persecuted man to skin and bones. All is clear, if for a moment we omit *v.* 17, which is partly, indeed chiefly, intended to explain why the speaker feels as God-forsaken as if he were in Sheól. It is not only because he is as 'strengthless' as the shades (see lxxxviii. 5), but because, under the fascinating gaze of a hundred insolent eyes, he cannot realise the 'guidance' of that Eye (xxxii. 9), without which all is like the shadow of death ('while these,' in *v.* 18 *b*, will still be intelligible from *v.* 14). Next restore *v.* 17, but with the provisional omission of the third

line. What a gain arises to the sense from that omission! These 'masterless hell-hounds' (Bunyan) have clustered around him from all quarters (see on lix. 7), not to kill him (for death cannot be far off), but to gloat over his sufferings and to plunder him (*vv.* 18, 19). The third line of *v.* 17, is a subordinate detail (see below). A second tristich was needed to correspond to the first (*v.* 16); *v.* 18 is only a distich to make up the number of eight lines for the strophe.

16 **My palate**, &c. Something is evidently wrong in the text. 'My strength' does not suit the parallelism, and the image of the potsherd suggests rather 'my palate' (see crit. note).—**Thou layest me**, &c. He considers everything as an instrument in the hands of God. His troubles are but the messengers who conduct him to 'dusty death,' not, however, in the Shakespearian sense of those words, for 'Death' is here a synonym for Sheól (as vi. 6, &c.) The Babylonian Hades is described as 'the place where much dust is their nourishment' (*Descent of Istar*, l. 8). Comp. *v.* 36 and xxx. 10.

17 **They have digged into my hands and my feet**, or, as an alternative reading (of inferior authority) is generally rendered, 'Like a lion at my hands and my feet' (i.e. they have beset me as furiously as lions and so completely that I can stir neither hand nor foot). Few now maintain the latter reading and rendering (see crit. note), which is too short a phrase to be intelligible, interrupts the lifelike description of the 'dogs,' and seems at any rate to assume that the lion specially attacks the hands and the feet. (To which Aben Ezra replies that a man defends himself with his hands and runs away with his feet: hands against a lion!) The genuineness of the text, as represented by the former reading, seems beyond reasonable doubt. We have here a subordinate detail in the behaviour of this troop of half-wild dogs. It is a feature true to life, as Tristram and others

have pointed out. The pariah dogs which prowl about in packs in Eastern cities are in general cowardly, but if provoked might rush at a man's hands or feet, and wound them. (One of two renderings given side by side in the Targum—I refer to Bomberg's Rabbinical Bible—is 'they bite my hands and my feet.')

18 **I may number**, &c. This clause is not in sequence to the last clause of *v.* 17; it has to be explained on the analogy of *v.* 15. His emaciation is due, not to bodily ill-treatment, but to mental agony.

19 **They part**, &c. Here the figure of the dog is interrupted. According to Ewald, the sufferer is imagined as a prisoner condemned to death. But the inhumanity of the enemies will be more striking without supposing this (comp. Mic. ii. 8, Job xxiv. 7, 10). The psalmist is partly thinking of the plundering experienced by Israelites at the hands of their oppressors. The **vesture** is the large upper garment, which was only valuable as a whole.

21 **Sword . . . dog**. Strictly, these dogs would only indirectly cause death by their continued worrying, the sufferer being half-dead already without them. But, as 'sword' in line 1 shows, it is of a less ignoble but more bloodthirsty foe than the dog that the psalmist is now thinking—the lion. 'Dog,' though not strictly appropriate as a parallel to 'sword,' was put, either for the sake of the rhythm, or to wind up the passage on the dog-like enemies. Now it is once more (see *v.* 14) the turn of the 'lion-like.' The meaning is that Israel and Israel's great leader draw on themselves the hatred of both high and low, both noble and ignoble, among those who 'enquire not after God.'—**My dear life** (so Geddes and the American Reviser's margin). Comp. xxxv. 17. Keble, 'mine orphan'd one;' Kay, 'my solitary one' (following Jerome). Calvin defends the latter rendering very forcibly, comparing xxv. 16, where, however, it is the 'ego' which is *yākhīdh*; here it is something

belonging to the 'ego,' viz. the 'soul' (see parallel line). De Witt has, 'my only life,' following Vulg.'s *unicam meam* (Purvey, 'myn oon alone'), which of course means *unicè dilectam*, as also does Sept.'s *τὴν μονογενῆ μου* (comp. Sept. Gen. xxii. 2 and Prov. iv. 3). A.V. ('my darling') appropriates a phrase much wanted for another Hebrew word ('a pleasant child' in Jer xxxi. 20 is weak). The preciousness of life is at any rate the idea; see on vii. 6, 'my glory.'

22 **The lion's mouth** (comp. v. 14). Comp. Esth. xiv. 13 (apocr.), 2 Tim. iv. 17. The lion, with his open jaws, is an image of the great world-empire (whether Assyria or Babylonia) which threatened to annihilate Judah as it had virtually annihilated N. Israel. See Isa. v. 29, Nah. ii. 11-13, Jer. iv. 7, Dan. vii. 4.

—**The wild oxen.** Worse foes even than 'bulls of Bashan.' The *rîm* (Assyrian for Heb. *re'ém*) is represented in the Assyrian sculptures with two long curving horns and a hump. See on Isa. xxxiv. 7. That some species of *urus*, or wild ox, is meant was first proposed by Arnold Boot. The unicorn of some Oriental sculptures has been amply discussed in Mr. R. Brown's monograph.—

Thou hast answered me. The poet has the imperative on the tip of his tongue, but changes his mind at the price of a break in the parallelism. It is the 'perfect of confidence' = 'thou hast decreed to answer me' (viz. by delivering me; cf. cxviii. 5). See crit. note.

23 'Thou answerest not (v. 3) is the key-note of vv. 2-22; 'thou hast answered me,' of vv. 23-32.

—**My brethren,** i.e. my fellow-Israelites. In fact, vv. 23-26 specially relate to Israel.

24, 25 A song of praise in the 'great congregation' (v. 26). All true believers are directly concerned in the wonderful deliverance of their representative. Hence 'ye that fear Jehovah' (which includes proselytes; see on cxv. 11) precedes 'all ye seed of Israel.'

26 **From thee is my praise.**

'Thou art the Alpha (and Omega) of my song.' The parallel passage, lxxi. 6, weakens this into 'Of thee is my praise continually.'—**In the great congregation.** Is the temple standing (Ewald), or does the poet anticipate (see introd.)?—**My vows,** i.e. my praises (comp. vv. 23, 27), as l. 14, &c.

27 Comp. the parallel passage, lxxix. 32, which hardly favours the view that a legal feast is meant, such as the *zèbakh sh'lāmim*, 'thank-offering;' at any rate, we must infer that the meal connected with the offering is all that is in the writer's mind (comp. on Isa. xxv. 6). It is simpler to recall the image of Jehovah as an entertainer, and His blessings as a feast (see xxiii. 5).—

The afflicted, of course, means the martyr-church of Israel (see on ix. 13).—**Let your heart revive,** not so much an appeal to 'be of good cheer,' but the most trenchant form of assertion = ye shall have a vivid feeling of happiness, and this **for ever**, because the 'latter days' of changeless joy for Israel have begun. It is as if the afflicted ones could not believe in the duration of their happiness; the poet, with fervent sympathy, calls on them not to be afraid to rejoice. Or, 'your heart' might mean 'your personality;' but this seems inconsistent with the vagueness of the sequel.

27, 28 But he has also the 'enthusiasm of humanity.' He has learned to 'love his enemies.' The heathen have forgotten God (ix. 18); His wondrous works shall rouse them from their insensibility. He has now become their king and their God; outward and inward lordship cannot be dissevered. This 'universalism' of the psalmist marks him out as either a forerunner or a member of the *later* Jewish Church (comp. xlvi. 9, 10, xcvi. 1, xcix. 1). This, however, is not the most interesting point. We must ask how it is that 'the personal deliverance swells beyond all private proportions, and has for its sequence the setting up of God's kingdom

over the whole world.'¹ See introd.

30-32 (See crit. notes; 'eating' is quite out of place here.) Many see in *v.* 30 simply the antithesis of rich and poor, rendering in *b*, 'all that are on the point of going down' = in extreme poverty. But a parallel is wanting.—**The fat ones**, i.e. those in the full vigour of life (as *xcii.* 15), opposed to the feeble shades in the underworld.—**The dust**, i.e. *Sheol* (see on *v.* 15). Jehovah's covenant embraces the living and (in some sort) the dead; comp. *Phil.* ii. 10. The eschatology of the author is peculiar, but do we not find various eschatologies and views of death elsewhere, e.g. in the Book of Isaiah, *xxv.* 8, *xxvi.* 19, *lxv.* 20? Earlier psalmists thought of Hades as the

land where praise is silent; but this psalmist proffers as a *viaticum* to the dying the privilege of worship after death. He goes beyond the author of Job, who can simply affirm that '(even) they that are deceased tremble (before Eloah),' Job *xxvi.* 5, R.V.

31 'One generation goeth, and another cometh.' But there is comfort in the thought that *we* shall have trained our successors to the service of God. My strength may be brought down, and my days shortened (sings Israel personified, *cii.* 24; comp. 19), but a new generation shall fill up that which remaineth. Suffer me to live on earth till the tradition of God's might be firmly fixed in Israel (*lxxi.* 18; comp. above, *v.* 23). Similarly *xlviii.* 14, *lxxviii.* 4.

PSALM XXIII.

THE resting pilgrim's song. The speaker is any pious Israelite in whose mind both national and personal hopes and fears rest side by side. A national element in the psalm cannot be denied. The language used in *v.* 1 reminds us, on the one hand, of the Asaphite references to Jehovah's flock, and on the other, of the lovely words referring to the nation in *Deut.* ii. 7. The foes in *v.* 5 may well be national foes (comp. *iii.* 7). The 'dark valley' may be parallel to the 'valley of Baca (?)' in *lxxxiv.* 7, and the 'table' to the feast of the afflicted in *xxii.* 26. Still the 'national' and the 'personal' elements cannot be dis severed by the most potent analysis. The Shepherd's tending is, no doubt, 'for the sake of His name' ('Jehovah, *Israel's God*'). But 'Israel's Shepherd' (*lxxx.* 2) does not neglect the individual; from Jeremiah's time onwards this truth was realised with increasing vividness. It has found its classic expression in this psalm, which brightly contrasts with the pathetic confession of the noble Clifford, 'We have felt with utter loneliness that the Great Companion is dead.' On the character described, see *Ecce Homo*, ed. 2, p. 8.

The rhythm is perhaps not uniform throughout; but there is a tendency to alternate trimeters (lines with three beats) and dimeters (those with two). By some happy instinct C. B. Cayley (the translator of Dante) approaches in his verse-rendering the form of the original. But from an æsthetic point of view Herder's version must be pronounced far superior. Crashaw's is a beautiful adaptation to the Christian sentiment.

- 1 Jehovah is my shepherd; I want for nothing.
- 2 In pastures of young grass he couches me :
to reposeful waters he gently guides me ;
my soul he doth restore.

¹ Brownlow Maitland, *The Argument from Prophecy*, p. 96. This small work proves that it is possible to be an apologist and yet a candid student of exegesis.

- 3 He leads me along in right tracks
because of his name ;
4 Should I even walk in a ravine of Hades gloom,
I will fear no evil.

[No unseen foe shall hurt me,]
for thou wilt be with me ;
thy club and shepherd's staff,
they will comfort me.

- 5 Thou furnishest a table before me
in the presence of my foes ;
thou hast anointed my head with oil,
my cup is abundance.
6 Surely good fortune and lovingkindness shall pursue me
all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in Jehovah's house
for length of days.

1 **My shepherd.** A title equally true of Jehovah's relation to the people and to the individual (regarded as drawing his moral and physical life from the nation). See on lxxx. 2.

2 **Reposeful (or rest-giving) waters.** Lit., 'waters of rest,' or, perhaps, 'waters of resting-places' (such as the oases in the desert). Comp. cxxxii. 8, and Ass. *manakhtu* 'resting-place.'—**Gently guides me.** Friedrich Delitzsch would render, 'makes me to lie down,' *na'álu* being a synonym of *rabaçu*. To me, this simply confirms the idea of restful guidance which A.V. found in *y'nahel* in Isa. xl. 11. See, however, crit. note. Hengstenberg, 'he tendeth me,' following Sept., Vulg. (comp. Purvey, 'he nurschide me on the watir of refreshing').—**Doth restore.** Crashaw—

When my wayward breath is flying,
He calls home my soul from dying.

The 'soul' is the conscious, individualised principle of life ; faintness indicates, in Hebrew phrase, that

this 'soul' has 'gone out' (Cant. ii. 6, A.V., 'my soul failed'). Explaining this line of the nation, it finely expresses the tenacity of Israel's self-consciousness under the stress of prolonged trial.

3 Still as applicable to each 'Israelite indeed' as to Israel. **Right tracks**, as opposed to delusive tracks which lead nowhere. Calvin and even Clericus, with A.V., prefer 'paths of righteousness,' but this spoils the allegory by introducing an interpretation. 'Just paths' would be better—i.e. paths traced out in accordance with the divine standard ; cf. 'just balances.'

4 The happy 'lamb of God' holds fast to his confidence alike in prosperity and adversity, the one figured by 'the reposeful waters,' the other by one of those narrow mountain glens so common in central Palestine, haunted by robbers and wild beasts, and dismal even at midday.¹—**Hades gloom** (lit., shadow of Death, i.e. of Hades) may mean either 'gloom like that of Hades' or 'the very gloom of

¹ Such, for instance, as the Wady el Haramiya ('the Robbers' Valley'), described by Renan in his *Vie de Jésus*, chap. iv., and which he identifies with the 'valley of weeping' (i.e. of 'oozing waters') in lxxxiv. 7 (but see note). National tastes differ ; Tristram gives a very different description (*Land of Israel*, p. 165). Socin seems to agree with Renan (Baedeker's *Palästina*, p. 341).

Hades.' I now incline to the former view, but the latter is not at all impossible, and deserves to be explained. Accepting it, the 'ravine' will be, not Sheól or Hades itself (which is a city with gates, Job xxxviii. 17), but Virgil's 'fauces Orci,' Milton's 'rifted rocks whose entrance leads to Hell' (*Comus*): one remembers that the Babylonian Hades was situated in the recesses of Mount Arálu. The psalmist may perhaps be alluding to the dread moments preceding the judgment of the soul (cf. Halévy's view, on xvi. 10, 11).¹ The Egyptians figured to themselves the departed soul as going through narrow passes and defiles haunted by serpents and monsters (such as the Babylonians also imagined in their own underworld). The psalmist may hope to be escorted by his good shepherd along the awful road to the city of darkness,² as the pious Egyptian king was escorted by Amen Ra, when approaching the tribunal of Osiris. On the alternative rendering 'black darkness' see crit. note.—**Thou wilt be with me**, in the darkness where unseen foes may attack me at an advantage. The words supplied may not be the right ones; but they complete the sense and restore symmetry.—**Thy club**. Of this 'club' the weapon rendered in ii. 9 'mace' was a development. Osiris had such a 'mace' (*Records of the Past*, viii. 122; cf. x. 79).—**Thy staff**. Moses the shepherd says in the Korán (xx. 19), 'It is the staff on which I lean, and with which I beat down leaves for my sheep, and I have other uses for it' (e.g. guidance).—**They will comfort me**.

Clericus well, 'ea sunt quæ me consolabuntur.'

5 We are now at one of the 'resting-places' of the flock (cf. Cant. i. 7). Or better, like a true Semitic poet, our author leaps to a new figure, and says, 'Jehovah bids me to a feast' (cf. on xvi. 5, xxii. 26). Is the table spread in this world or the next? The psalmist does not draw the distinction. Whilst life lasts, that feast shall last (see introduction to Ps. xvi.) The foes will look on, themselves excluded.—**Thou hast anointed, &c.** See on xlv. 8, and cf. civ. 15, Cant. i. 12. An Egyptian illustration may be added. Every rich man had in his household an anointer who had to place a cone of ointment on the head of his master, where it remained during the feast. Ointment to the Jews was a symbol of joy; so too it was in Egypt. At the solemn entry of a king on a festival-day, everyone poured sweet oil on his head (Erman, *Aegypten*, i. 316-7).—**Is abundance**. A large portion being a proof of hospitality (Gen. xliii. 34).

6 This is not (like its seeming antithesis, cxl. 12 *b*) a naïve assertion of the retribution-doctrine of Job's friends, but a riddle for the believing heart to solve. So also is the following statement of the psalmist's assured dwelling-place. See note on xxvii. 4, and for the image of the guest in Jehovah's house, note on xv. 1, lxxxiv. 11. The alternative rendering of the second line (notice the points) is 'And I shall return (and dwell) in the house,' &c., implying that the psalmist is in exile. Less naturally (cf. Perowne)

PSALM XXIV.

THE psalm as it stands is divisible into two parts, the connexion of which is at any rate not obvious. The God of *vv.* 1-6 is the God of the infinitely great and the infinitely small, the God who made the earth and all that is

¹ *The Monthly Interpreter*, iii. 470-72.

² Sheól is called indifferently Death, and the Shadow of Death ('Hades gloom'), Job xxxviii. 17. The Babylonian Hades, 'the house from whose visitors the light is excluded' (*Descent of Istar*, l. 7, Sayce's transl.)

in it, and yet does not disdain to be called 'my God;'¹ the God of *vv.* 7-10 is a victorious war-God. The religion of the first part is inward and moral; the religion of the second, so far as it can be characterised at all, is not in harmony with that of the first. The first part speaks of a going up to meet Jehovah (to explain *v.* 3, 'Who may go up [with the ark] to the mountain of Jehovah,'² is surely as arbitrary as anything in German exegesis); the second, of Jehovah's entering an ancient fortress. It is much more natural (as in the case of *xix.*, *xxvii.*, *lxxx.*) to suppose that two psalms have been joined together by a later editor for use in the temple-service. Not, however, out of mere wilfulness. The great God may be conceived of as coming either to His people collectively, or to each member thereof individually. But as are the individuals, so is the nation; the psalm begins therefore with a testing description of the worshipper whom the 'King of glory' will own when He enters His citadel. This may have been the connexion which he would have us supply mentally, regardless of the distinctive peculiarities of the two parts.

The second part is evidently taken from a song of victory (comp. *xx.*, *xxi.*, *xlvi.*) Its more precise object must be considered elsewhere.

- 1 The earth is Jehovah's, and the fulness thereof;
the world, and they that dwell therein,
- 2 For it was he that founded it upon the seas,
and established it upon the floods.
- 3 Who may ascend the mountain of Jehovah,
and who may rise up in his holy place?
- 4 He that has clean hands and a pure heart,
that has not set his desire upon treachery,
nor sworn deceitfully.
- 5 He shall receive a blessing from Jehovah,
even righteousness from the God of his salvation.
- 6 Such is the generation of those that enquire after him,
of those that seek the face of Jacob's God.

(Fragment of another Psalm.)

- 7 Lift up your heads, O ye gates,
yea, lift yourselves up, ye ancient doors,
that the King of glory may come in.
- 8 'Who, then, is the King of glory?'
'Jehovah the Strong and Valiant,
Jehovah the Valiant in battle.'
- 9 Lift up your heads, O ye gates,
yea, lift them up, ye ancient doors,
that the King of glory may come in.
- 10 'Who, then, is the King of glory?'
'Jehovah Sabáoth, he is the King of glory.'

¹ See Ewald, *Die Lehre der Bibel von Gott*, &c., ii. 1, p. 267.

² Cornill, in Luthardt's *Zeitschrift*, 1881, p. 341.

1-6 On this moral compendium, see introduction to Ps. xv.

4 **Heart** = conscience (li. 12). — **Set his desire.** Lit., 'lifted up his soul.' Note same phrase in xxv. 1, whence Hitzig infers that the next phrase 'upon emptiness' (so literally) is the opposite of 'upon Jehovah,' i.e. 'upon idols' (cf. xxxi. 7, Jer. xviii. 15). 'Upon wickedness,' however (cf. Isa. v. 18), suits the context better; or, which I prefer, 'upon treachery' (falsehood in action; cf. xii. 3, xxvi. 4, xli. 7).

5, 6 **Righteousness,** i.e. righteous treatment from a faithful God.

— **Such is the generation,** i.e. the class of men (see on xii. 8). How well v. 6 concludes the psalm!

— **The face of Jacob's God.** The text-reading is usually rendered 'thy face, even Jacob' (so Delitzsch, after Targ.); but we should have expected 'even Israel' (comp. lxxiii. 1). See crit. note.

7 **Lift up your heads.** A feeling hyperbole, similar to one in Sappho (Grotius). The gates seem too low for the majesty of the great king. Comp. the image in Prov. xvii. 19. — **Ye ancient doors.** So Grotius, with true historical tact. 'Everlasting' was suggested by the Messianic application; Milton retains it in his own poetic application of the passage, *Par. Lost*, vii. 565-9. — **That the King,** &c. Not only by the Philistines (1 Sam. iv. 7), but by Moses himself (Num. x. 35) we are told that the ark was in some sense identified with Jehovah, as the symbol of his mighty invisible aid in Israel's wars. It is very probable (comp. 2 Sam. vii. 17) that David and any contemporary psalmists had the same form of belief. But to suppose that the later psalmists whose works have been thought worthy of preservation cherished this 'archaic religion' (Ewald, *Altterthümer*, p. 169) would be to deny the progressiveness of the sacred writers. In xlvi. 6, lxviii. 19, there-

fore, we seem bound to hold that Jehovah's 'going up' is a poetical way of saying that His special interposition for the armies of Israel is over. It seems to me that we obtain a worthier meaning by interpreting on the analogy of these two passages. It is slightly captious to object that to 'go in' is not to 'return.' The secondary sense of 'returning' is as justifiable in Hebrew as in Arabic.

8 **Valiant.** Or, 'hero;' or, 'warrior.' Comp. lxxviii. 65, ciii. 20. So in Ex. xv. 3 (a post-Davidic hymn), 'Jehovah, the man of war.'

10 **Jehovah Sabáoth.** Yahvé (the God of) Çebáoth (i.e. hosts or legions) is the fullest title of 'Israel's God' (lix. 5), and occurs first in 1 Sam. i. 3, 11, whence it has been thought to have arisen at the close of the period of the Judges. It is doubtful whether it referred in the first instance to the hosts of Israel (as Kautzsch among recent critics¹), or, as I have argued elsewhere,² to the stars—the 'host of heaven'—in which case this title is a protest against star-worship. It is true that the earliest *proof* of star-worship in Israel is Am. v. 26;³ but mythologic researches show that Babylonian influences existed all round the Israelites in a degree which presupposes a long and continuous propagation. The date of Deuteronomy may be long after Moses, long after David; and yet the tendencies referred to in Deut. iv. 19, xvii. 2, 3, may well have been more or less known long before that book was written. I look upon Jehovah Sabáoth as a kind of condensed creed, expressing (1) the superiority of Israel's God even to creations so great and so mysteriously potent as the stars, (2) the manifoldness of the heavenly powers which Jehovah can employ in his people's behalf. Compare in this connexion two passages, the one much earlier than the other—2 Sam.

¹ Herzog-Plitt, *Realencyclopädie*, art. 'Sabáoth.'

² *The Prophecies of Isaiah*, i. 11, &c.

³ See Schrader, *The Cuneiform Inscriptions and the O. T.*, on Am., *l.c.*; Lotz, in Herzog-Plitt's *Realencyclopädie*, xiv. 694.

vi. 2, 'the ark of God, over which is called the name of Jehovah Sabáoth that dwelleth upon the cherubim,' and Jer. x. 16, 'the Former of all things, he is his inheritance, whose name is Jehovah Sabáoth.' 'That dwelleth upon the cherubim' (see on xxii. 4), and 'the Former of all things,' both express the supremacy of the great God over the powers of nature which He has

made. That Sabáoth also came to have a reference to the armies of Israel is suggested by 1 Sam. xvii. 45; comp. Josh. v. 14, but the stars, with which the angels were in general so closely connected (but see on ciii. 20, 21), have the first claim to be considered. Whether 'Sabáoth' may be regarded as a germinal proper name, is considered below on lix. 6.

PSALM XXV.

AN appeal to the divine compassion, interrupted by a few verses (8-10, 12-14) in the didactic style, and proceeding, as the closing verse suggests, from pious Israel personified. Ps. xxxiv., a hymn of thanksgiving, is its counterpart. The two poems have the same structural peculiarities. Each is composed of 21 'alphabetic' distichs, and an additional closing distich. In each of the former, the first word begins with a fresh letter of the alphabet, the 22 letters being taken in order, except that in *v.* 5 each line does duty for a distich, *Hè* beginning *v.* 5 *a*, and *Vāv* *v.* 5 *b*. This statement, however, will only be correct, if we may be allowed, following Bickell, to correct xxv. 1, 5, 7, which appear in the received text the first as a monostich, the second and third as tristichs, and also xxv. 18, which, on the 'alphabetic' principle, wants an initial word beginning with *Qōf*. Each psalm too closes with a second *Pè*-distich, relative to the deliverance of Israel, from which, on the analogy of a later (post-Christian) Jewish custom, Lagarde¹ too boldly concludes that the authors of the psalms were named respectively Pedāēl and Pedāīah (cf. Neh. viii. 4). For other alphabetic psalms, see ix. and x., xxxvii., cxi., cxii., cxix., cxlv.

- 1 Unto thee, Jehovah, do I lift up my soul ;
for thee have I waited all the day long.
- 2 In thee do I trust, let me not be shamed ;
let not mine enemies triumph over me.
- 3 Yea, let none that wait for thee be shamed :
let those be shamed who vainly break their faith.
- 4 Make me to know thy ways, Jehovah ;
teach me thy paths.
- 5 Direct me in thy truthfulness,
and teach me, for thou art my saviour-God.
- 6 Remember thy compassions, Jehovah,
and thy lovingkindnesses, for they have been from of old.
- 7 The sins of my youth and my transgressions
remember not for thy goodness' sake, Jehovah.
- 8 Good and upright is Jehovah,
therefore will he instruct such as miss their aim in the way.

¹ *Symmikta* (1877), p. 107; *Academy*, Jan. 1, 1872. Hofmann compares Nos. 1, 2, 5 of the Reshuyoth which follow the Targum to the prophets in Lagarde's edition.

- 9 The afflicted will he direct in that which is right,
yea, the afflicted will he teach his way.
- 10 All the paths of Jehovah are lovingkindness and truth
unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies.
- 11 For thy name's sake, Jehovah,
forgive mine iniquity, for it is great.
- 12 Who, then, is the man that feareth Jehovah?
him will he instruct in the way that he should choose.
- 13 He himself shall abide in good fortune,
and his seed shall inherit the land.
- 14 The secret of Jehovah is for them that fear him,
and his covenant for their instruction.
- 15 Mine eyes are continually toward Jehovah,
for he shall bring my feet out of the net.
- 16 Turn thou unto me, and have pity upon me,
for desolate am I and afflicted.
- 17 Enlarge the straitness of my heart,
and bring me out of my distresses.
- 18 [Arise,] behold mine affliction and my travail,
and pardon all my sins.
- 19 Behold mine enemies, for they are many,
and they hate me with cruel hatred.
- 20 Preserve my soul, and deliver me:
let me not be shamed, for I have taken refuge in thee.
- 21 Let integrity and uprightness guard me,
for I await thee still, Jehovah.
- 22 Set Israel free, O God,
from all his straitenings.

1 The second line is restored by Bickell from *v.* 5, where it does not fit in well with lines 1 and 2, whereas here it is the counterpart of line 1.

3 **Vainly**, i.e. without any (good) result; cf. ii. 1, 2 Sam. i. 22.

7 Israel's 'youth' is meant, as in cxxix. 1; so that this passage supplies the key to li. 8. The distinction between 'sins' or 'failings' and deliberate 'transgressions' seems clear. To 'sin' (*khāfā*) is properly 'to miss the mark' (see next verse, and comp. Prov. viii. 36). Generally, however, *khaffāth* is used in a stronger sense, as Julius Müller (*Doctrine of Sin*, i. 93) rightly observes, without implying the excuse

of incapacity or want of thought. The second line of *v.* 7 in the received text supplies an unnecessary qualification of the first—'according to thy lovingkindness remember them for me.' See introduction.

8 **Such as miss their aim.** The text-reading is 'sinners,' but this seems to say too much (see i. 1). Bickell's correction of the points is beautiful. Comp. on xxxix. 2, and see Prov. viii. 36, xix. 2.

11 **For it is great.** Calvin, 'quia multa est' (comp. xl. 13). The plea is virtually that in xxxviii. 5 *b.*

14 **The secret**, viz. that of divine

truth, not necessarily as embodied in a written revelation (comp. cxix. 18), but that which suffering believers found it so difficult to understand—the principle of God's providential dealings. For the sense of 'secret' or 'private communication,' comp. Prov. xi. 13, Am. iii. 7. We may also render, 'the intimacy' comparing lv. 18; notice, however, the difference of the contexts in the two psalms. *V. 14 a* is repeated in Prov. iii. 32 *b* (see Del. *ad loc.*)—**And his covenant . . .** Understand, 'is designed,' or explain, 'his secret and his covenant are appointed for their instruction.

15 **Mine eyes**, &c. Comp. the proper name Elyōēnai or Elyehōēnai, 'Unto Yahvè are mine eyes,' 1 Chr. iii. 23, Ezra viii. 4, &c.

16 **Desolate**. Or 'friendless' (lit., solitary). The psalmist lacks the full faith which inspired iii. 7, iv. 9, xxvii. 10.

17 **Enlarge . . .** Or, 'relieve the troubles of my heart, and bring me out of my straits.' Comp. cxix. 32, 2 Cor. vi. 11, and see on iv. 2. Ancient authorities are on the side of A.V. and R.V.; but R.V.'s marg. has the weight of scholarly opinion on its side.

22 **Set free**. The root-meaning is to sever, to separate (cf. Ex. viii. 19, A.V. 23, *ḥ'dūth* = division). This verb is a favourite element in proper names; see introduction (end), and refer to the Concordance; in Phœnician we have Baalpada (Euting).

PSALM XXVI.

INNOCENCE and especially love to Jehovah's house appeal confidently (see *v. 12*) for their natural reward. According to Ewald, *v. 9* expresses the occasion of the psalm—a prevalent wasting sickness. But surely the petition which it contains is only incidental, though doubtless it suggests that the times were dangerous. The speaker represents the nation (see on *v. 11*).

- 1 Right me, Jehovah, for I walk still in mine integrity
and trust in Jehovah without wavering.
- 2 Prove me, Jehovah, and try me ;
assay my reins and my heart.
- 3 For thy lovingkindness is before mine eyes,
and I walk still in thy truthfulness.
- 4 I have not sat with men of falsehood,
neither have I converse with dissemblers.
- 5 I hate the congregation of evil-doers,
and will not sit with the ungodly.
- 6 I wash my hands in innocency,
and would fain compass thine altar, Jehovah ;
- 7 That I may proclaim with the voice of thanksgiving,
and tell out all thy wonders.
- 8 Jehovah ! I love the precinct of thy house,
and the place of thy glory's habitation.
- 9 Take not away my soul with sinners,
nor my life with men of blood ;
- 10 In whose hands are outrages,
and their right hand is full of bribes.

- 11 But as for me, I walk on in mine integrity ;
O set me free, and have pity upon me.
- 12 My foot stands on even ground ;
in full choirs will I bless Jehovah.

3 **In thy truthfulness**, i.e. ever conscious of it as my guide (xxv. 5, xliii. 3). God's will marks out the saint's path, and the truthful revelation of this, whether in command or in promise, is his guide. So lxxxvi. 11.

4, 5 See on i. 1. For **dissemblers**, the Heb. has, picturesquely, 'self-hiders.' Cf. the 'dyed' or hypocritical class of Pharisees in the Talmud (*Sota*, 22 b).

6 **I wash my hands**, i.e. I keep them free from sin (as lxxii. 13). The symbol is explained by Ex. xxx. 17-21; comp. Deut. xxi. 6 Matt. xxvii. 4.—**Compass thine altar**. Going round in procession was a characteristic form of Israelitish as well as of Arabian and Roman religion. The special object of the rite in the present case was a sacrifice of thanksgiving (see *v.* 7). See further on cxviii. 27.

8 **I love**, &c. To take part in the temple-services seems the highest conception of happiness to the 'Israelite indeed.' Comp. xxvii. 4.—**Thy glory's habitation**.

Comp. Ex. xvi. 10. To the psalmists, however, the conception of God's glory is spiritualised, like that of the 'form' (xvii. 15) which the glory enveloped (Ex. xiii. 21). Hence in xxvii. 4 'glory' is paraphrased into 'pleasantness' (see note).

11 **I walk**, i.e. I go on walking, in spite of these 'outrages.' Or, I will still do so (after my deliverance).—**Set me free**. Israel, then, is the speaker (see xxv. 22).

12 Faith anticipates the answer to prayer. **On even ground** (as xxvii. 11). The speaker has been like a man stumbling over a rugged path. Comp. iv. 2; the ideas of broadness and levelness are connected, as in the Arabic salutation, 'God give thee breadth and levelness' (Freytag, s.v. *rahūba*).—**In full choirs** (Heb. *b'maghēlīm*). Cf. xxii. 23, 26 (*b'qāhāl*). The same form (with fem. term.) occurs in lxviii. 27, where (as here) the 'congregation' spoken of is vocal with praise, justifying the above version.

PSALM XXVII.

THE rhythm of this psalm changes at *v.* 7, and both tone and contents of the remaining verses differ widely from those of part i. The obvious explanation is that two psalms have been linked together, the one full of inward calm delight, regular in form and gracefully simple in style, the other a psalm of anxious supplication, which, judging from the Massoretic text, is inferior in rhythm and of less carefully turned expressions. Both seem to be national psalms.

- 1 Jehovah is my light and my salvation ;
whom have I to fear ?
Jehovah is the fortress of my life,
at whom have I to tremble ?
- 2 When evil-doers came near against me
to eat my flesh,
those my foemen and mine enemies
stumbled and fell.

- 3 Though a host should encamp against me,
 my heart would not fear ;
 though war should rise against me,
 still would I be tranquil.
- 4 One thing have I asked of Jehovah—
 that is my desire ;
 that I may dwell in the house of Jehovah
 all the days of my life,
 to gaze upon the pleasantness of Jehovah,
 and to contemplate his temple.
- 5 For he treasures me in his bower
 in the day of trouble ;
 he covers me in the covert of his pavilion,
 upon a rock does he exalt me.
- 6 And now shall my head be exalted above mine enemies
 round about me :
 fain would I offer in his pavilion
 sacrifices of resounding mirth,
 I would sing and make melody unto Jehovah.
- (Probably another Psalm.)*
- 7 Hear, Jehovah, when I cry with my voice,
 have pity upon me and answer me.
- 8 [Hast thou not said unto me,]
 ‘ Seek ye my face ’ ?
 unto thee my heart hath said,
 ‘ Thy face, Jehovah, will I seek.’
- 9 Do not hide thy face from me,
 thrust not thy servant aside in anger :
 thou hast been my help,
 abandon me not, neither forsake me,
 O God of my salvation.
- 10 For my father and my mother have forsaken me,
 but Jehovah will take me up.
- 11 Show me thy way, Jehovah,
 and lead me on an even path
 because of my keen-eyed enemies.
- 12 Give me not over unto the greed of my foes :
 for against me there have risen up false witnesses
 and such as breathe out injurious words upon me.
- 13 I am confident of beholding
 the goodness of Jehovah in the land of the living.

14 Wait for Jehovah :

be courageous, and let thine heart gather strength,
wait, I say, for Jehovah.

2 **To eat my flesh**, like wild beasts (Jer. xii. 9, Isa. lvi. 9). See xiv. 4.

4 **That I may dwell**, &c. How this can be, is an enigma for the faithful (cf. on xxiii. 6). The psalmist thinks in the first instance of the house of Jehovah on Mount Zion. There he has learned what communion with God means, and he feels towards the temple like a child towards its mother. But though, like another poet (lxxxiv. 5), he envies those who can always worship God in the one local sanctuary which the law permits, he reaches out towards a purely spiritual solution of faith's enigma. Those who are not mere formal worshippers, and whose sacrifices are symbols of heart-devotion (see on *v.* 6), will find themselves in God's house at all times and in all places, and will enjoy a fuller and deeper security than that implied in the old phrase, 'Jehovah's sojourner' (*gēr Yahvè*). Thus explained the words will seem to some to anticipate those lines of Browning—

Why, where's the need of temple, when
the walls
O' the world are that? What use of
swells and falls
From Levites' choir, priests' cries, and
trumpet calls?

But the three following lines do not represent the position of any psalmist. Nor do even the three lines quoted fully represent our psalmist's mind. Caanan, which Hosea (viii. 1) calls 'the house of Jehovah,'¹ is still the centre of his world, and the temple still holds a place of special honour (cf. on xxviii. 2), like the sacrament of the Eucharist to one who fully believes in extra-sacramental spiritual influence. His point of view is naturally a little different

from that of a post-Christian writer who exclaims, 'O Israel, how great is the house of God, and how large the place of his possession' (Baruch iii. 24)!—**To gaze upon the pleasantness of Jehovah**. Sept. well, τοῦ θεωρεῖν με τὴν τερπνότητα Κυρίου. We should have expected 'to gaze upon His glory (or His face);' but the conceptions of God's 'glory' and of His 'face' have become spiritualised (xxvi. 8 *b*). 'To gaze upon,' therefore, means 'to experience.' God's 'pleasantness' (so xc. 17) means His tender friendship: 'softness' is the root-meaning; the verb is used of a friend (2 Sam. i. 26), the adjective of a beloved one (Cant. i. 16). So too, in Phœnician, the cognate is used of the divine favour (Yehawmelek's inscr., *l.* 8).—**To contemplate his temple** (or, 'his palace'), like a stranger admitted to a sight of the king's 'great house' (*hēkal*). Spiritually explained, this means 'to see traces of God's greatness and goodness wherever I may be.'

5 **Treasures me**, &c. So xxxi. 21. The righteous man 'lives' at such times 'in virtue of his trust' (Hab. ii. 4). To 'trust' is to hold fast by the 'Rock of ages' (Isa. xxvi. 4). 'Treasures;' for this sense, see on lxxxiii. 4.—**In his bower**, i.e. in the shelter which he has screened off, as by thick plants, from plotting enemies (symbolised in Isa. iv. 6 by heat, storm, and rain). So lxxvi. 3 (הַבַּיִת), Lam. ii. 6 (הַבַּיִת), Ps. xxxi. 21, Isa. iv. 6 (הַבַּיִת).

6 The psalmist does not undervalue sacrifices; these, however, are made real by the spiritual qualities of faith and love. **Sacrifices of resounding mirth**, i.e. such as are accompanied by songs of thanksgiving (cf. cvii. 22 *a*). *T'rū'āh*, pro-

¹ The expression is peculiar. If it stood alone it might mean the people of Yahvè, but see Hos. ix. 15, compared with *v.* 3; also Jer. xii. 7. The nearest parallel is Ass. *bit K'humri* = 'house of Omri,' i.e. N. Israel, but Omri is not the name of a god.

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perly, a loud sound; the context decides whether that of a trumpet (Num. x. 10), a voice singing (xxxiii. 3), or a voice shouting (lxxxix. 16). We might also render 'sacrifices with a trumpet sound' (De Witt, after Gesenius); this requires us to assume that Israel is the speaker (Num. x. 10 does not apply to the thank-offerings of individuals).

8 The verse is formed of two distichs, the first of which is imperfectly preserved. Clearly something must be supplied, and a small transposition effected. To avoid this conclusion, Hitzig ingeniously but impossibly gives us, 'Seek him, O my face,' continuing as in A.V.

9, 10 Does not the psalmist clearly speak in the name of Israel—'thy servant' (see on xix. 12), the 'friendless and afflicted' (xxv. 16)? He seems to compare himself to a sobbing child, deserted by its parents (note the monotonous rhyming cadence in *v. 9b*). We might render *v. 10*, 'Should my father and my mother have forsaken me, Jehovah would take me up.' Comp. with Calvin Isa. xlix. 15 (scarcely Isa. lxiii. 16).

11 **Thy way . . . an even path.** See on *v. 9*. The 'path' is 'even' in a physical, and not (as in cxlili. 10) in a spiritual sense. That the good man is directed by God's

Spirit is 'doctrina perutilis,' but 'præsentī loco quadrare non videtur' (Calvin). For the figure of 'even ground,' see on xxvi. 12.

12 **False witnesses.** The phrase suggests more than it expresses. The foes of the righteous psalmist were absolutely devoid of good faith (as *v. 12*, xii. 3, and elsewhere). Persecution is represented again as mainly carried on by false witness in xxxv. 11, cix. 2; but false witness stands for a class of hostile actions, just as 'bloodshed' stands for great crimes in general (see on li. 16).—**Breathe out;** rather, 'puff out.'—**Injury,** i.e. false witness, one of the principal forms of injustice (see on xxxv. 11).

13 **I am confident,** &c. The received text implies an aposiopesis—'Unless I had been confident, &c. (I should utterly have fainted).' But the first word is marked as spurious by the points placed above it, and evidently it makes the rhythm too heavy (see *crit. note*). The author of Ps. cxvi. (see *vv. 9b, 10a*) may possibly allude to the verse in its correct form.—**In the land of the living.** See Isa. xxxviii. 11 (comp. 18, 19).

14 Perhaps this verse belongs to the chorus; comp. xxxi. 25, xxxii. 11.

PSALM XXVIII.

THE peril hinted at in Ps. xxvi. (comp. *v. 3* with xxvi. 9, 10) has become more imminent, and deliverance now becomes the central thought of pious worshippers. It is a life and death struggle between the depositaries of progressive religion and a selfish, malignant enemy; hence the imprecations, which deserve to be treated as leniently as 'the words of the desperate' in Job and Jeremiah. At *v. 6* (see note) the tone changes. The supposed Jeremian authorship must be considered elsewhere.

- 1 Unto thee, Jehovah, do I cry,
my rock, be not deaf unto me,
lest if thou hold thy peace towards me
I become like those that have gone down into the pit.
- 2 Hear the voice of my beseeching
when I cry unto thee for help,
when I lift up my hands toward thy holy chancel.

- 3 O drag me not away with the ungodly
and with those that work naughtiness,
who speak peace to their neighbours,
while evil is in their hearts.
- 4 Give them according to their deeds,
and according to the evil of their practices ;
give them after the work of their hands,
render to them their deserts.
- 5 For they give no heed unto the deeds of Jehovah,
nor unto the work of his hands—
he shall throw them down, and not build them up.
- 6 Blessed be Jehovah !
for he has heard the voice of my beseeching.
- 7 Jehovah is my stronghold and my shield,
my heart trusted in him, and I was helped ;
therefore my heart dances for joy,
and with my song will I thank him.
- 8 Jehovah is a stronghold for his people, and an asylum ;
he is a full salvation for his anointed.
- 9 Save thy people, and bless thine inheritance ;
shepherd them, and carry them for evermore.

2 Toward thy holy chancel.

Comp. *Korán*, Sur. ii. 139, 'Turn thou thy face towards the sacred Mosque.' The psalmist too has his *kibla*; comp. v. 8 (note), 1 Kings viii. 29, Dan. vi. 10. R.V. marg. renders, 'toward the innermost place of thy sanctuary.' This is correct (it is the 'holy of holies' which is meant; see 1 Kings vi. 16), but lengthy. Analogous renderings to 'chancel' are sanctioned by the authority of A.V.; and 'chancel' in (Christian) Ethiopic literature is actually rendered by the cognate of Heb. *ḏbhîr*. See also lviii. 30 (note), where, as in 1 Kings vi., 'temple' (*hēkāl*) is used somewhat as our 'nave.' The root-meaning of *ḏbhîr* is 'to be behind,' the holiest place, in the temple of Jehovah as in that of Bel-Merodach,¹ being at the extreme end. The rendering 'oracle' (Aquila, Symm., Jerome) is based on a pardonable etymological

mistake. The Sept. translators either render *vaós* (as here), or transcribe *δαβίρ* or *δαβείρ* (so Theodotion).

6 It is difficult to decide whether the portion which begins here antedates the answer to prayer (cf. vi. 9-11, xxvi. 12), or was added by the same psalmist later (so Ewald, Hitzig). I incline to the former view, regarding the tense as the perfect of certitude. 'Such sudden turns,' remarks Driver (*H. Tenses*, ed. 2, p. 44), 'are no less effective and emphatic than the abrupt introduction of a new and dissimilar key in a piece of music.'

8 **For his people.** Sense, rhythm, and parallelism require this rendering, instead of 'for them' (Mass. text.) So Sept., Pesh.; cf. xxix. 11. Rhythm too favours bringing 'and an asylum,' or (the other *mā'ōz*) 'and a fortress,' into the first line. For the close coup-

¹ Sayce, *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 64; cf. Tiele, *Bemerkungen über Ê-sagila in Babel*, &c. (Separatauszug), p. 184.

ling of 'ōz and mā'ōz comp. Jer. xvi. 19; for *y'shū'ōth* as applied to Jehovah, xlii. 6, &c. Those, however, who prefer R.V.'s rendering, 'and he is a stronghold of salvation,' &c.,

may compare Isa. lx. 18, 'thy walls, Salvation.'

9 **Shepherd them.** Cf. on lxxx. 2.

PSALM XXIX.

A NOBLE specimen of parallelism and a poetical gem of purest ray. The storm-piece in *vv.* 3-9 may be compared to one of the fairest works of Arabian poetry (see Imra-al-Kais, as rendered by Lyall, *Translations*, p. 103). Prologue and epilogue, too, are worthy of their position. With remarkable tact, the psalmist recognises the poetical value of the conception of the *b'nē 'ēlīm*. Milton with equal tact follows him in those numerous passages in which the phrase 'gods' or 'sons of God' is applied to supernatural beings, less than 'God Supreme' and more than man. Comp. 'O Sons, like one of us Man is become' (*Paradise Lost*, xi. 84). The reader of Goethe will not forget to compare the songs of the Archangels in *Faust*; Job and Ps. xxix. have both contributed ideas and motives. The tone of the last two lines of the song of Michael reminds us especially of the peaceful close of the psalm. Ps. xxix. is specially important with reference to Israel's view of nature (see on Ps. civ.) Comp. Ewald, *History*, ii. 128.

- 1 Ascribe unto Jehovah, O ye sons of the gods, *demi-*
ascribe unto Jehovah glory and strength.
- 2 Ascribe unto Jehovah the glory of his name,
worship Jehovah in hallowed pomp.
- 3 The voice of Jehovah is upon the waters,
the God of glory thunders,
Jehovah is upon the great waters.
- 4 The voice of Jehovah is with power! *thunders (v. 3) understood*
the voice of Jehovah is with majesty.
- 5 The voice of Jehovah breaks the cedars;
yea, Jehovah breaks in pieces the cedars of Lebanon;
- 6 And Lebanon he makes to skip like a calf,
and Sirion like a young wild ox.
- 7 The voice of Jehovah hews [the rocks],
[hews them with] flames of fire;
- 8 The voice of Jehovah shakes the wilderness,
Jehovah shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.
- 9 The voice of Jehovah pierces the oaks,
yea, strips the forests bare;
[fearful is he from his high places,]
whilst in his palace all are saying, Glory.
- 10 At the storm Jehovah sat enthroned,
Jehovah is enthroned as King for ever

11 Jehovah will give strength unto his people,
Jehovah will bless his people with peace.

1 **Sons of the gods.** Heb. *b'nē 'ēlim*, which means either 'sons of El (or, God)'—a double plural form *ben 'zēl* (so Gesenius, *Gram.* § 103, 8; Ewald, *Gram.* § 270 c), or 'sons of (the) Elim (or, gods).' Elim = Elohim; cf. Ex. xv. 11, Dan. xi. 36. 'Sons of El' would emphasise the derived and dependent existence of the beings referred to; 'sons of (the) Elim,' their membership in the class¹ of superhuman, heavenly powers, and consequently their possession of a common nature with the head of this class, Jehovah. The latter explanation seems the more natural one, and brings our passage into closer relation to the narrative in *Job*, where, precisely as here, a special assembly of the court of heaven is described. ('The sons of God' in *Job* i. 6, ii. 1, A.V., should rather be 'sons of the Elohim'; cf. Gen. vi. 2, where the article is again expressed. Davidson.) *B'nē 'ēlim* occurs once again (lxxxix. 7) in a striking context relative to the celestial 'ecclesia' (Sept.) Are we to identify these 'sons of the gods' (we can hardly say, 'of the Elim'; see on lxxxii. 1, 7) with the 'seraphim' (see *Isa.* vi. 1, and comp. *v.* 9 with *Isa.* vi. 3), or with the distinctly spiritual beings called angels?² Probably with the latter (as Targ.) The heavenly 'seraphim' are mentioned but once, and in *Job* (v. 1; cf. iv. 18) we find the same term 'holy ones' used of the 'angels' which in lxxxix. 6-8 is applied to the 'sons of the gods.' 'Sons of the gods' is in fact a fragment of that naive, popular phraseology which had affinities with the common Semitic religion. The mythic systems of 'heathen' nations knew of no messengers, who were not themselves gods. The broad distinction

between God and the angels (comp. Rev. xix. 10) arose later. Twice at least in the Psalter (lviii. 2, lxxxii. 1, 6; see also on xcvi. 7) the 'angels' are even called Elim or Elohim, which reminds us of Gen. i. 27, xxviii. 17, xxxii. 2, where the title is given to the angels exclusively, not to mention Gen. xx. 13, &c. May we illustrate this by the variable and elastic application of 'god' even in Christian Greek?³

2 **In hallowed pomp**, i.e. in festival attire. The celestial worshippers must not be behind those of earth (xcvi. 9). Sept. has, 'in his holy court' (rather, courts), as again in xcv. 9. A various reading (Del.); comp., however, Jennings and Lowe on xcvi. 9.

3 **The voice of Jehovah** refers no doubt primarily to the pealing thunder (see *Isa.* xxx. 30, Ex. ix. 28, A.V., marg., and comp. *Korán*, xiii. 14), but also, as the context shows, to the other awful sounds which accompany the storm. Ewald's 'Hark! Jehovah,' &c., is therefore unsuitable. This 'voice' is said to be **upon the waters**, i.e. possibly the Mediterranean Sea (Schröder), more probably the 'cloud-masses, dark with water' (xviii. 12; cf. *Jer.* x. 13); but if the phrase means the same thing in line 1 as in line 3, almost certainly the 'waters that are above the heavens' (cxlviii. 4; cf. on civ. 3).—**Jehovah is upon**, Ewald, '(even) Jehovah upon,' 'Jehovah' being in apposition to 'the God of glory.' But Jehovah himself and not merely his 'voice' is 'upon the great waters' (civ. 3).

5-8 The storm discharges itself in its full fury, passing from Lebanon in the north to Kadesh in the south. **The cedars of Lebanon**, a grander image than even the traveller can

¹ Cf. the phrase 'sons of the prophets,' and Robertson Smith's *The Prophets of Israel*, pp. 85, 388. See also crit. note.

² The 'angels' or 'messengers' of civ. 4, which forms a link between the ordinary idea of the 'angels' and those Titanic forms the cherubim and seraphim.

³ Harnack, *Dogmengeschichte*, p. 82, n. 2.

now realise, except from the description of Ezekiel (Ezek. xxxi. 3-9). On *v.* 6, see crit. note.

7 The text has simply, 'The voice of Jehovah cleaves (or, hews) flames of fire,' i.e. sends forked lightning, or, less plausibly, 'hews them out' from the storm-clouds. But this gives no parallelism and is a strange expression. The cleaving of rocks is a regular feature of theophanies.

9 **Pierces the oaks.** 'The common translations suppose this passage to relate to the *hinds bringing forth young*, which agrees very little with the rest of the imagery either in nature or dignity: 'nor do I feel myself persuaded even by the reasonings of the learned Bochart on this subject, *Hieroicoicon*, part i. bk. 3, ch. 17.² Whereas the oak struck by lightning admirably agrees with the context.' Bishop Lowth, Lect. 27. See crit. note. — [**Fearful is he, &c.**] Something has evidently dropped out, or the distich will be imperfect. The parallel line suggests the contrast of God's awful working upon earth, and the jubilation of the heavenly ones at this glorious revelation of Divine power. (The ideas of fearfulness and glory combined, as in Deut. xxviii. 58.) Comp. the transition at the opening of *Faust*—

Doch ihr, die ächten Göttersöhne,
Erfreut euch der lebendig reichen Schöne.

For it is surely the temple of heaven

which is meant (xi. 4, xviii. 7, Isa. vi. 1), not of heaven and earth together (as Cook). The participle **are saying** expresses that the cry of praise is heard while the storm rages.—**Glory** reminds us of Isa. vi. 3. Those who cry are the 'sons of the gods' (*v.* 1); the singular is used ('all of it'), to show that all cry in unison. 'Cry,' for we have not yet come to the 'harpers harping with their harps' (Rev. xiv. 3).

10 The psalmist's healthy religious nature reacts against the depressing physical effect of these awful sights and sounds. In justification of **storm** see crit. note. The common rendering is 'flood,' i.e. either Noah's flood or the inundation produced by a violent rain, such as that which Imra-al-Kais describes in its effects in the poem referred to above—'ces ondées violentes, qui suivent les grands coups de tonnerre, et qui arrivent de préférence à la fin des orages' (Volney). But one can scarcely suppose an abrupt reference either to the Deluge or to a phenomenon which the description of the storm has ignored. What we expect in the epilogue is a final word containing the poet's reflexions as he looks back on this fearful but glorious manifestation of Israel's God.

11 Comp. xxviii. 8, 9. **With peace** (or welfare). Perhaps implying that storms are but good angels in disguise. Or this last verse may be a liturgical addition.

PSALM XXX.

CLOSELY parallel to Ps. vi. ; comp. *v.* 3 *b* with vi. 3 *b*, *v.* 6 with vi. 2 *a*, *v.* 10 with vi. 6. Compare also Ps. xxviii. Here again we must ask, Is it the resurrection of Israel (see on *v.* 2), or the deliverance of any righteous man whose sorrows are not merely personal but national? Or may both references be combined?

2 I will extol thee, Jehovah, for thou hast drawn me up,
and not made mine enemies to rejoice over me.

3 Jehovah my God !

I cried unto thee for help, and thou didst heal me.

¹ It is inanimate nature which is elsewhere referred to by the poet.

² For the premature 'calving' of the hinds, Ewald refers to line 76 of the Arabic poem already mentioned (in introd.) ; cf. Mr. Lyall's translation, part 3.

- 4 Jehovah ! from Hades thou broughtest up my soul,
from those sunk in the pit thou recalledst me to life.
- 5 Sing unto Jehovah, O ye his loving ones,
and give thanks to his holy memorial.
- 6 For a moment passes in his anger,
a life in his favour ;
weeping may come to lodge at eventide,
but (hark !) a glad cry in the morning.
- 7 But I—I said in my security,
I shall never be moved.
- 8 Jehovah, in thy favour
thou hadst set me on strong mountains :
thou didst hide thy face,
and I was confounded.
- 9 Unto thee, Jehovah, did I cry,
and unto the Lord made I supplication.
- 10 'What profit is there in my blood,
in my going down to the pit ?
can the dust give thee thanks ?
can it declare thy truthfulness ?
- 11 Hear, Jehovah, and have pity upon me :
Jehovah, be a helper unto me.'
- 12 Thou didst turn for me my mourning into dancing,
thou didst loose my sackcloth, and gird me with joy,
- 13 To the end that my glory might make melody unto thee without
ceasing :
Jehovah my God, I will give thanks unto thee for ever.

2 **Drawn me up**, viz. from Sheól (*v.* 4; cf. lxxxviii. 5, Jon. ii. 3); or from a 'sea of troubles' (cf. xviii. 17, lxix. 2, 3). The former view gives greater force. Ephraim 'died,' says Hosea (xiii. 1), when he 'became guilty through the Baal,' and the same prophet speaks of the future resurrection of Israel and Judah (Hos. vi. 2). The idea was taken up by later prophets and psalmists (Ezek. xxxvii. 1-10, Isa. xxvi. 19, and notes on vi. 6, lxxxviii. 4-10).

3 **Thou healedst me**. A phrase used of Israel (Ex. xv. 26, Isa. vi. 10, xxx. 26, lvii. 18, 19, Hos. vii. 1, xi. 3, and elsewhere).

5 **His loving ones** = those who are in covenant with God (l. 5). *K'hésed*, like the Christian ἀγάπη, is born of duty and not of impulse (see on xii. 1).—**His holy memorial**. So xcvii. 12. Jehovah is holy, i.e. separate and different from all that is earthly, and in the sphere of morals inconceivably just and kind (Isa. lv. 9). Holy too must be His memorial (*zékér*),¹ i.e. His name (Ex. iii. 15), that by which He reveals Himself and would be remembered. From *v.* 6 it appears that in the writer's present mood the leading feature in God's self-revelation is forgiving love (xxxiii.

¹ The Assyrian cognate *zīkru* = name; cf. Haupt in *Hebraica*, vol. iii. (1885), p. 230.

21 is slightly different). We may compare Hos. xi. 9, where 'the Holy One' is almost a synonym for 'the Forgiving One,' just as in Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7, 'Jehovah' is paraphrased as 'compassionate and pitiful.'

6 A 'moment' is opposed to 'a life,' as the shades of 'evening' to the brightness of 'morning.' Grief is but a moment in a lifetime of God's favour. Comp. Isa. xxvi. 20, liv. 8, Ps. xlvi. 6, xlix. 15, xc. 14, cxliii. 8.

7-12 The speaker had to learn this truth (*v.* 6) by experience. He had never thought that he might lose God's favour. Hence suddenly trouble came; he fancied that God had forsaken him. Then he tried the effect of prayer, and soon a 'glad cry' followed.

8 **On strong mountains.** (See crit. note.) A figure of security. Hitherto the psalmist had been walking 'in slippery places.' Comp.

xxvii. 5, Isa. xxxiii. 16 (note here the same use of the plural of category), and this fine passage of the Mu'allaqa of al-Harith—

As though the Fates, beating against us,
met
A black mountain, cleaving the topmost
clouds.

(Lyll, *Translations*, p. 22.)

9-11 Note the repetition of the name Jehovah. Trouble gave the speaker an intuition of its meaning—**In my blood.** As if Jehovah were the slayer. Cf. xxii. 15, Job xiii. 15, xvi. 18.—**The dust,** i.e. 'the grave' (xxii. 30), not 'my dead body' (as Gesenius after Theodoret and Kimchi); see vi. 6.

13 **My glory.** The text has simply 'glory,' which Kimchi explains of the immortal soul in antithesis to the dead body (see last note), while Ewald, Hitzig, and Olshausen give it the sense of 'praise.' Even great scholars neglect the Septuagint.

PSALM XXXI.

A BEAUTIFUL psalm in which all the keys of the soul's music are touched; see Savonarola's touching application of it to his own case in his unfinished *Meditatio*. The speaker may be either a prophet or the pious kernel of Israel regarded as having a prophetic calling (cf. on *v.* 17); but the parallelism between *vv.* 10-13 and some at least of the so-called typically Messianic psalms (see *Isaiah*, ii. 200) suggests that the latter is the truer view. The elegiac tone and the variableness of mood suggest a comparison with Jeremiah; and, true enough, we find verbal points of contact both with Jeremiah and with Lamentations. Comp. *v.* 11 with Jer. xx. 18; *v.* 13 *b* with Jer. xxii. 28; *v.* 14 (especially) with Jer. xx. 10; *v.* 18 with Jer. xvii. 18; *v.* 23 with Lam. iii. 54. The phrase 'a dread (is) on every side' occurs six times in Jeremiah (see also below, on *v.* 17).

- 2 In thee, Jehovah, have I sought refuge,
let me never be put to shame:
in thy righteousness rescue thou me.
- 3 Incline thine ear unto me, deliver me speedily,
be unto me an asylum-rock,
a fortified house, that thou mayest save me.
- 4 For thou art my high crag, and my fortress,
and for thy name's sake thou wilt guide and gently lead me.
- 5 Bring me out of the net that they have hidden for me,
for thou art my stronghold.

- 6 Into thy hand I commend my breath ;
 thou settest me free, Jehovah, thou God of truth.
- 7 Thou hatest those that give heed to lying vanities,
 but as for me, in Jehovah do I trust.
- 8 Let me exult and be joyful in thy lovingkindness,
 who sawest mine affliction,
 and tookest notice of the troubles of my soul,
- 9 And didst not enthrall me under the hand of the enemy,
 but didst plant my feet in a broad place.
- 10 Have pity upon me, Jehovah, for I am in trouble ;
 mine eye is fallen in for sorrow,
 my soul and my body [are confounded].
- 11 For my life is consumed with heaviness,
 and my years with sighing ;
 my strength breaks down because of my guilt,
 and my bones are fallen away.
- 12 I am the butt of insult to all my foes,
 and to my neighbours a shaking of the head,
 and a terror unto all my familiar friends ;
 they that see me without flee away from me.
- 13 I am cut off, like a dead man, from remembrance,
 I am become like a vessel left to perish.
- 14 For I hear the backbiting of many,
 cause for terror is on all sides ;
 now that they conspire together against me
 their devising is how to take away my life.
- 15 And I—on thee, Jehovah, have I trusted ;
 I have said, Thou art my God.
- 16 My times are in thy hand ;
 rid me out of the hand of mine enemies and from my pursuers.
- 17 Make thy face to shine upon thy servant ;
 save me for thy lovingkindness.
- 18 Let me not be shamed, O Jehovah, for I have called upon thee ;
 let the ungodly be shamed, and put to silence in Sheól.
- 19 Let the lying lips become mute,
 which speak arrogantly against the righteous
 in haughtiness and scorn.
- 20 How plenteous is thy goodness, Jehovah,
 which thou hast treasured up for those that fear thee,
 which thou dost practise unto them that take refuge in thee
 before the sons of men !

- 21 Thou coverest them in the covert of thy face
from slanderers among men :
thou treasurest them in a bower against the accusing of tongues.
- 22 Blessed be Jehovah !
for he hath made passing great his lovingkindness unto me in
a fenced city.
- 23 And I—I had said in mine alarm,
I am cut away from before thine eyes :
but surely thou heardest the voice of my beseeching
when I cried for help unto thee.
- 24 O love Jehovah, all ye his devout ones :
Jehovah keeps faithfulness,
and abundantly recompenses him that deals haughtily.
- 25 Be courageous and let your heart gather strength,
all ye that wait for Jehovah.

2-4 These verses are copied, with some variations, in lxxi. 1-3. Strange enough, as they are full of the conventional phraseology of the psalms of supplication.

6 Theodoret sees here a reference to past deliverances as the ground of present confidence (and so in *vv.* 8, 9). But the perfect of confidence is here more natural and forcible than that of history.—

Into thy hand, i.e. into thy providential care. A more tender expression than 'thy hands' (Sept., Luke).—**My breath**. Heb. *rūkhī*. Comp. Job x. 12, 'and thy care (or, providence) hath preserved my breath.' 'My spirit' facilitates a confusion with 'my soul' (as in Theodoret); the poet means 'the breath (*rūakh*) of life' (Gen. vi. 17; cf. Lam. iv. 20, Gen. ii. 7).—**God of truth**. Almost equivalent to 'God of faithfulness' (Deut. xxxii. 4). God's 'faithfulness' is the revelation of His essential 'truth.'

7 Imitated in Jon. ii. 9. **Lying vanities**, the opposite of 'God of truth.' Hitzig, 'der wesenlos [unreal] nichtigen.' But the qualifying word may mean 'useless,' and so 'disappointing.'

10-13 See introd. **Have pity**, &c. Faith grounded on past experiences revived the psalmist's courage for a moment. But his sensitive nature cannot long resist

the trials without and within to which it is subjected.

11 **My guilt** (or, mine iniquity). 'My punishment' is also possible; cf. xl. 13, Ezek. iv. 5, Gen. iv. 13 (?), xix. 15. This combination of senses of *'āvōn* reminds of the twofold sense of Assyr. *annu* (= Heb. *aven*)—1, sin, guilt (Deluge-story, iv. 15, v.1.); 2, penalty (Annals of Assurbanipal, viii. 10).

12a Lit., 'I am (the subject of) insult (proceeding) from all my foes.'

12b **A shaking of the head** (as xliv. 15). The text has 'exceedingly,' though Delitzsch and De Witt (after Michaelis and Dathe) assume a right to render 'a burden.' Comp. the descriptions in xxxviii. 12, lv. 14, lxxxviii. 9, 19, Job xix. 13, Isa. liii. 3b.

14 Lines 1 and 2 come from Jer. xx. 21, and being at once un-rhythmical and but ill adapted to the context, are possibly a later insertion and substituted for something else. It is of course hopeless to restore the original words, which were probably already illegible in the time of the editor. See on lxxix. 5.—**The backbiting of many** (comp. *v.* 21). Or, perhaps, 'a stealthily spreading evil report.' In Jer. xx. 10, some understand the word here rendered 'backbiting' of the hostile talk, others of the injurious reflections upon character, of which

the prophet was the subject. In the former case, the 'hostile talk' is explained by the 'Let us inform against him' which follows. But usage is in favour of the latter view. Etymologically *dibba* seems to mean that which 'creeps' from mouth to mouth (comp. Prov. xxv. 10), though Hitzig explains the 'creeping' or rather 'soft treading' as an analogical metaphor for 'whispering.' The limitation to 'evil report' comes from Old Testament usage; yet from Gen. xxxvii. 2, where *rā'āh* is added epexegetically to *dibbā-thām*, we see that the original meaning of *dibbāh* (like that of Syriac *ḥēbā*; see Matt. iv. 24, ix. 26 Pesh.) is simply 'report.'—**Cause for fear, &c.** Heb. *māgōr missā-bīb*. A favourite expression of Jeremiah, reflecting his timid and retiring character.

16 **My times**, i.e. the crises, the 'changes and chances' of my life. Browning glorifies this passage by intertwining with it the idea of development (*Rabbi Ben Ezra*, st. 1). The psalmist merely thinks of life as a series of hairbreadth escapes.

17 **Thy servant**. This modest though glorious title is never applied to himself by Jeremiah, but only to Israel (Jer. xxx. 10, xlvi. 27, 28; comp. Ezek. xxxvii. 25). May not this be at least a faint sign of date? The psalmist is hardly influenced by the great prophecy in II. Isaiah. Comp. on xix. 12.

21 **The covert of thy face**. A lovely variation upon the phrase in xxvii. 5. The shining of God's face (like brooding wings, lxi. 5) shelters believers from the storms of human passion.—**From slanderers among men**. An exact parallel, at least in idea, to 'against

the accusing of tongues' (comp. *v.* 14 *a*), gained, it is true, at the expense of an emendation. But Hebrew text must surely be wrong, though R.V., giving it a gentle twist, renders, not quite as unsuitably as most, 'from the plottings of man.' [So too Dathe, and Gesenius as an alternative.] A.V.'s rendering, however, 'from the pride of men' (derived from Kimchi) is also a plausible guess; see Isa. xl. 4, Heb., where 'the ridges'—seemingly a cognate word—might be a figurative expression for pride; cf. Hab. ii. 4 (Heb.), Ps. cxxxii. 2 (Heb.) But a figurative phrase like this is improbable here. See crit. note.—**From the accusing of tongues**. Sept. excellently, ἀπὸ ἀτιλογίας γλωσσῶν; 'strife' of A.V. and R.V. is too vague.

22 **In a fenced city** (see crit. note); i.e. (if the words are to be taken literally) either by protecting me in it when besieged, or by bringing me safely into it (comp. lv. 19, line 1). We may also render 'like (in the manner of) a fenced city' (comp. Isa. xxxiii. 21, or Jer. i. 18). In any case, the expression 'hath made passing great,' &c., favours a reference to some exceptional event in the speaker's history (see on iv. 4); similarly the next verse.

23 Borrowed by the author of Jon. ii. 5. Comp. xxx. 7 *a*.—**In mine alarm**. Or, 'in my trepidation, scare, anxiety.' 'In my haste' (A.V.; Kay) substitutes a weak secondary for the strong primary meaning. Better Keble, 'in my wild hurrying heart.'

25 A verse for the chorus; comp. xxxii. 11. A seldom noticed quotation occurs in I Cor. xvi. 13 (see Sept.)

PSALM XXXII.

THE prologue (*vv.* 1, 2; comp. *v.* 11) strikes the keynote of the poem—the happiness of the truly righteous, that is, of the forgiven man. The strain then becomes first lyric and afterwards didactic. The lyric portion, which describes a fact of personal experience, is naturally the finer. As

in the two partly parallel psalms (vi., xxxviii.), the speaker is a pious Israelite who represents his people (Israel as it should be, and to a reasonable extent actually is): in short, we have here, principally though not exclusively, a national psalm. The way to obtain forgiveness is to confess the sin which has displeased God; this is certainly the second of the leading ideas of the psalm. It is, however, not merely an idea, but a fact. One great 'time of distress'—of distress occasioned by national sin—is over; God has visibly forgiven His penitent people (comp. lxxxv. 2, 3), and every 'devout man' feels the more assured in view of the possible recurrence of great national dangers (*v.* 6). It was not all at once that the singer and his brethren connected the ideas of sin and punishment, or rather of definite sins with definite punishment. At first they were like Job in the early period of his sufferings; they denied that God could have aught against them. Afterwards they came to recognise the existence of sins which no human eye could detect (xix. 13), and then what had been felt an unmerited punishment became a humbly accepted chastening. This is the second of the three Beatitude-psalms in Book I.

- 1 Happy he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.
- 2 Happy the man to whom Jehovah reckons not iniquity,
and in whose spirit there is no guile.
- 3 When I kept silence, my bones wasted away
through my roaring all the day long :
- 4 For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me,
my sap was turned as in the droughts of summer.
- 5 My sin I made known unto thee,
and mine iniquity I covered not ;
I said, I will confess my transgressions unto Jehovah,
and thou—thou tookest away the guilt of my sin.
- 6 For this let all men of love pray unto thee in time of distress,
when the flood of the great waters is heard ;
unto such an one they shall not reach.
- 7 Thou art a covert for me ; thou wilt guard me from trouble :
* * wilt thou surround me.
- 8 I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way thou art to go ;
I will counsel thee, keeping mine eye upon thee.
- 9 Be ye not like unto horse or mule, without understanding,
who must be curbed with bit and bridle,
till he can be brought unto thee.
- 10 Many pains hath the ungodly,
but he that trusts in Jehovah—
with lovingkindness will he surround him.
- 11 Be joyful in Jehovah, and exult, ye righteous ;
and ring out your gladness, all ye upright in heart.

1, 2 Observe the three terms for sin (compare *v.* 5 and li. 3-7, Ex. xxxiv. 7), which describe it (1) as a breaking loose from God, (2) as a missing of the right aim, (3) as perversion or distortion. To each of these a special term for forgiveness corresponds, (1) the taking away (of sin), *nāsā*, like *aipeu*, having a double sense, (2) its covering, or, less probably (on *kipper*, see Isaiah, vol. ii. index), its obliteration, (3) its non-imputation in the great account. The last of these three terms for forgiveness struck home to St. Paul (see Rom. iv. 6-9), who quotes *vv.* 1, 2 *a* to show that human righteousness in the sight of God is not legal but imputed. He might also have quoted xix. 13, where it is clear that the 'absolution' or 'acquittal' is based upon the non-imputation of 'unknown' faults. In one sense, the sins cannot but exist; in another sense, they are non-existent, because God does not call them to mind (evidently a popular mode of conceiving of forgiveness; see 2 Sam. xix. 19, 20).

—**No guile**; that is, according to most, no attempt to make oneself out to be better than one is. This is, perhaps, a little too special. Sincerity is with the psalmists a criterion of goodness; a 'guileless spirit' is equivalent to an upright character. If the set of the will is towards God and his moral law, a man is 'guileless'; if away from God, he is 'treacherous' or 'faithless.' It took the psalmist some time to find out that he was really 'treacherous.' His sin was not a mean one, like David's in 2 Sam. xi.

3 The psalmist **kept silence**, but only so far as concerns confession of sin. To expunge 'my roaring' (cf. xxii. 2) with Ley only simplifies the passage by weakening it.

4 **Turned**; cf. 'dried up like a potsherd' (xxii. 16).

6 **In time of distress**. The received text has, 'at a time of

finding,' or 'of hitting the mark' (comp. Prov. viii. 35, 36, where 'wisdom' is represented as an aim which may be 'found' or 'missed'), so that Sept's. *ἐν εὐθέτω καιρῷ* (similarly Pesh. renders) would seem a good paraphrase. The mark is surely God himself—no mere gift of God;¹ whatever we think of Lagarde's derivation of *EL*, God to the psalmists is their mark and their prize. To me, however, the implied possibility of missing the goal of life seems out of place in this connexion. If it were 'let all ungodly men,' or 'let all that are backsliders,' &c., it might pass, but for a *khāsīd*, i.e. one who responds to God's covenant-love, can there be a time which is not a 'finding time'? This consideration, joined to the strangeness of the form of expression in the Hebrew, leads me to accept Lagarde's very natural correction. See crit. note.—

When . . . is heard. The correction involved hangs together with the preceding one; the received reading is best rendered, 'surely, when great waters overflow,' &c. The 'overflow' of the 'great waters' may be simply a figure for any sore trouble, but the analogy of Isa. viii. 7, 8, xxviii. 15, Jer. xlvi. 2 (cf. Dan. ix. 26) suggests that the danger to Israel's national existence from her foreign foes (Assyria and Chaldæa) is meant, as perhaps also in cxxiv. 4, 5. The exemption promised to the *khāsīd* corresponds to that of the 'believer' in Isa. xxviii. 17 (comp. the false boast in *v.* 15).—Those who like may transpose the (,) and (;) at the end of lines 1 and 2 of this verse.

7 *b* 'With shouts of deliverance' begins the line in the received text. The Hebrew phrase, however, though plausibly defended by Delitzsch, is difficult, and so too is the meaning—to be 'surrounded' by one's own 'shouts,' is an expression which has no parallel. Instead of 'shouts' we should rather expect

¹ De Wette and Hupfeld understand 'forgiveness' or the like. The ancient Rabbis thought of 'a wife,' 'the Tora,' or 'death.' See Wünsche, *Der bab. Talmud*, i. 23.

something from the heavenly world, such as God's 'lovingkindness' (*v.* 10) or His 'favour' (*v.* 13). To answer this by referring to such phrases as 'girding with joy' (see xxx. 12, lxxv. 13) does not hit the mark. But though the received reading is impossible, a poet like Keble, with gentle violence, can transmute though not translate it—

Thou fill'st with songs of liberty
The glad air as I go.

8 I will instruct thee, &c. A promise, first, of moral teaching, and next, of protection in the path of duty. It is disputed whether Jehovah (so Tholuck, Olshausen, Ewald, Hitzig; cf. xvi. 7 *a*, xxv. 8, 12) or the psalmist (Calvin, Hupfeld, Delitzsch; cf. xxxiv. 12, li. 15) be the speaker. The figure of the 'horse or mule' in the next verse, and the reference in the present to a vigilant and powerful Eye (comp. Jer. xxiv. 6, and on xxxiii. 18), seem to favour the first view. Would a 'wise man,' like him who speaks here in the tone of Prov. i.-vii., have asserted such an absolute supremacy over his pupil as this verse describes? Whichever view be adopted, the transition, it must be owned, is extremely harsh. One almost regrets the insertion of *vv.* 8-10.—**I will counsel thee, &c.** A.V.'s rendering is appropriate (the soft guidance of the eye being contrasted with the harsh constraint of the rein), but too bold. See crit. note.

9 Horse or mule. Israel is likened to domestic animals in Hos. x. 11, xi. 4, Deut. xxxii. 15, &c., and contrasted with them, somewhat in the manner of our psalmist, in Isa. i. 3.—**Who must be curbed, &c.** A beautiful anti-

thesis. The horse or mule, at first so wild, is curbed with bit and bridle, and can then be led along, as quiet as a lamb (Isa. liii. 7), to its master. The received text is admittedly very difficult. Hupfeld renders, 'whose trappings consist in bit and bridle for curbing it, (because) it comes not near unto thee.' Delitzsch, 'with bit and bridle, its trappings, must it be curbed, else it comes not near unto thee.' But 'trappings' puts force upon the Hebrew; there is also a difficulty in the construction of the last clause, which Olshausen even gives up as unintelligible. One way out of the maze might yet be suggested; 'ornament' (so the Hebrew word, *'edyō*, rendered 'trappings' above, strictly means) might refer to the 'soul,' i.e. the feelings and longings of the animal or non-human 'soul' being described by a term also applicable (see on ciii. 5) to the human, to throw contempt on the splendour of human pride (comp. xlix. 21). In this case we should render, 'Whose spirit (or, wildness) must be curbed,' &c. But the awkward word *'edyō* is certainly not what the poet wrote. Bickell boldly omits it, on the plea of metrical necessity, but the Hebrew still remains difficult. In justification of my own reading, see crit. note.

10 Pains, viz. physical ones (as Ex. iii. 7, and partly Isa. liii. 3, 4). Here in the sense of 'plagues' (Sept. *μάστιγες*).

11 A verse for the chorus, like xxxi. 25. Note how the O.T. religion is throughout one of joy (of 'ringing joy'); even in Nehemiah (viii. 10) we read, 'The joy of Jehovah is your bulwark.' The final ruin of the outward forms of Judaism alone destroyed this joyousness.

PSALM XXXIII.

A COLLECTION of twenty-two distichs; the number dictated by that of the Hebrew letters. (So Pss. xxxviii., xxxix., cxlvi., Lam. v.) The distichs known are grouped in pairs, except at the beginning and the end, where we meet with triplets; and there is a clearly marked division at *v.* 12.

- 1 Ring out, ye righteous, your gladness in Jehovah ;
for the upright praise is seemly.
- 2 Give thanks unto Jehovah with the lyre ;
with a ten-stringed harp make melody unto him.
- 3 Sing unto him a new song ;
play cunningly with sonorous tone.
- 4 For the word of Jehovah is straight,
and all his doing is in faithfulness.
- 5 He loves righteousness and justice :
the earth is full of the lovingkindness of Jehovah.
- 6 By the word of Jehovah were the heavens made,
and all their host by the breath of his mouth,
- 7 Who gathered the waters of the sea as in a bottle,
who laid up the floods in store-chambers.
- 8 Let all the earth fear Jehovah ;
of him let all the world's inhabitants be in awe.
- 9 For *he* spake, and it came into being ;
he commanded, and there it stood.
- 10 Jehovah has brought the purpose of the nations to nought,
he has made the designs of the peoples of none effect.
- 11 The purpose of Jehovah shall stand for ever,
the designs of his heart unto all generations.
- 12 Happy the nation whose God is Jehovah,
the people he has chosen for a heritage unto him.
- 13 Out of heaven looks down Jehovah,
he beholds all the sons of men :
- 14 From the place of his habitation he gazes
on all the inhabitants of the earth—
- 5 He who forms all their hearts together,
who gives heed to all their works.
- 16 A king is not saved by a great army,
a hero does not deliver himself by great power :
- 17 A horse is vain for saving help,
neither causeth he any to escape by his great strength.
- 18 Behold, the eye of Jehovah is upon them that fear him,
upon them that hope for his lovingkindness ;
- 19 To deliver their soul from death,
and to keep them alive in famine.
- 20 Our soul waits for Jehovah :
he is our help and our shield.
- 21 For our heart shall rejoice in him,
because we have trusted in his holy name.
- 22 Let thy lovingkindness, Jehovah, brood over us,
according as we have hoped for thee.

1 Comp. xcvi. 12, cxlvii. 1, and see on cxi. 1.

2 *b* So cxliv. 9. Comp. xcii. 4, where the ten-stringed *nēbhēl* (Sept. generally *νάβλα* or *ψαλτήριον*, but twice *ὄργανον*) seems distinguished from the less perfect instrument in common use, which perhaps had fewer strings (comp. the Greek tetrachord). Against Josephus, who states that the *νάβλα* had twelve *φθογγοί*, see Grätz's *Commentary*, pp. 67-71, which gives the Jewish traditions. The best description of the *nēbhēl* and the *kinnōr*, bringing them into connexion with the Assyrian and Egyptian delineations, will however be found in Delitzsch's note on the subject, as rewritten in his 4th edit. (now translated). See also Wilkinson (*Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians*, ii. 296), who complains of the confused accounts of Israelitish music, and compare Rowbotham's *Hist. of Music*, i. 221.

3 **A new song.** So in five other places; see especially xcvi. 1, xcvi. 1, evidently based on Isa. xlii. 10. The deliverance from Babylon seemed to dim the splendour of all previous divine interpositions (Isa. xlii. 18).

5 *b* What a noble expansion of the range of the divine quality of covenant-lovingkindness (see on iv. 4)! Comp. cxix. 64, which is decisive against Hitzig's rendering 'the land' (i.e. Judah).

6 Comp. *v.* 9, cxlviii. 5, Isa. xlvi. 13. **By the word of Jehovah,** &c. Alluding probably to Gen. i. 6, &c. The creatorship of Jehovah is a favourite subject with II. Isaiah (e.g. Isa. xlii. 5, xlv. 12, 18, xlvi. 13), but without the conception of the agency of the divine word. The 'word' of prophetic revelation meets us often in pre-Exile writings; the creative 'word' in this passage only, which is therefore (as also cxlviii. 5, which presupposes this use of 'word') presumably a reflexion of the *וַיֹּאמֶר* וַיֵּאמֶר of Gen. i. Sirach took up

the expression and extended its reference: 'by His word,' he says, 'all things consist' (Ecclus. xliii. 26). Ewald,¹ from whom I take this reference, adds one to Wisd. xviii. 15, 16, but this splendid personification of the judicial 'word' of God has its antecedents in Isa. ix. 8 [7], Hos. vi. 5. The expression is anthropomorphic, and is based on the inseparable connexion of language and thought; it might mean simply God's plan (comp. 'he said in his heart' = he thought), but the context and the usage of the original phrase in Gen. i. show that it rather describes symbolically the effectual working out of God's plans and purposes, a mystic power being attributed to sacred words in the primitive stage of thought. Need it be added that the psalm-passage is not to be used as a proof-text for 'creation out of nothing' (2 Macc. vii. 28)? Poetic feeling and not later theology must be the guide of the interpreter. Cf. H. Schultz, *Alttestamentliche Theologie*, ed. 2, p. 527.

7 **As in a bottle** (or, wine-skin, *ἀσκός*; see on cxix. 83). This is the rendering of the oldest authorities (see crit. note). Most, however, pronouncing differently, 'like a harvest-heap.' So the Massoretic critics, supposing a reference to the passage of the Red Sea (Ex. xv. 8); but the context and the parallel line support the rival view. With Ewald we may compare Job xxxviii. 8, 'Or who shut up the sea with doors?' That the sea means the 'waters above the heavens' (Hitzig) is less likely, in spite of Job ix. 8, 'and treadeth upon the high places of the sea' (parallel to 'the heavens'), and Job xxxviii. 37, where 'the pitchers of heaven' = the clouds. — **In store-chambers.** So in Job xxxviii. 22, 'the store-chambers of the snow,' and 'of the hail;' and in Jer. x. 13 of the wind (cf. cxxxv. 7).

10 **Has brought.** Or, 'bringeth' (comp. *vs.* 13, 14); less pro-

¹ *Geschichte Christus'*, p. 98; comp. *Die Lehre der Bibel von Gott*, iii. 2, 83-4.

bably, as the 'new song' (*v.* 3) requires a justification.—**The purpose of the nations**, i.e. the Chaldæans, the Edomites, and all other enemies of the nationality of Israel; or perhaps those referred to in lxxxiii. 4-9.—**The designs of his heart**, as in Jer. xxix. 11, Isa. lv. 8, 9, are God's plans of mercy for Israel, and through Israel for the world.

12 Comp. cxliv. 15 and (see also *v.* 20) Deut. xxxiii. 29.

13 Comp. xi. 4, xiv. 2, cii. 20.

15 **He who forms**, &c. So Zech. xii. 1; comp. cxxxix. 13. Not merely the human body is the work of the Creator, but the mind and conscience, the intellectual, moral, and emotional nature of man, and not only of man, but of individual men ('together' virtually = *κατὰ μόνας*, as Sept. and Symm. render). Individual life has now fully realised its existence; the man has fully emerged from the family and the tribe. Were the psalmist a philosopher, we should say that he inclines to Creationism rather than to Traducianism, but he is far removed from scholastic theories (see Schultz, referred to on *v.* 6).

16, 17 Note the parallelism between lines 1 and 3, 2 and 4. **Is not saved . . . for saving help** (as xcvi. 2). Comp., besides Deut. xxxiii. 29, Zech. ix. 9, 'he is just and saved,' i.e. victorious; victory

being a gift from on high (xxi. 6). These verses give a generalisation from facts of recent experience. Cf. cxlvii. 10 (xx. 8).

18, 19 **The eye of Jehovah**. A lovely symbol of 'providence.' Comp. xxxii. 8, Ezra v. 5. So *pāgad* 'to visit' = care for (so often used of God; comp. on viii. 5) is etymologically 'to open the eyes wide (upon).'
—**Upon them that hope**, &c. Comp. cxlvii. 11 *b*.
—**From death**, i.e. probably from pestilence (Jer. xv. 2). War, famine, and pestilence, the three great outward dangers of ancient Israel (2 Sam. xxiv. 3). War has been mentioned in the last distich.

20 **Waits**. A different word from that in xxvii. 14, and only found again in cvi. 13. But the proper name read by the Massoretic critics Hakaliah (Neh. i. 1, x. 2) should probably be pronounced Hakke-le-yah (i.e. Wait for Jehovah); comp. Elyoenai (see on xxv. 15).
—**Our help**, &c. Comp. cxv. 9, 10, 11 (and on *v.* 12, above).

21 **In his holy name**. 'Holy' = divine (see on xxx. 5). The context must decide which of the elements of God's 'holy' nature is in the writer's mind. In xxx. 5 it is His forgivingness; elsewhere (e.g. Isa. x. 20, xxxi. 1) it is His almightiness. Here it seems to be primarily His power which excites trust (*v.* 20 *b*), but a power which is wielded by love (*v.* 22 *a*).

PSALM XXXIV.

AN alphabetic psalm, the first ten verses of which (2-11) have the character of a hymn, the last twelve (12-23) of a sermon. On the structure, see introd. to Ps. xxv., of which this psalm is the counterpart, as well in contents as in form (except in the relative order of the **β** and the **γ** verse). Columba, the apostle of the Picts, had transcribed the Psalter as far as *v.* 10 when the hand of death touched him.

- 2 I will bless Jehovah at all times :
his praise shall be continually in my mouth.
- 3 My soul shall make her boast in Jehovah ;
the afflicted shall hear, and rejoice.
- 4 Magnify Jehovah with me,
and let us exalt his name together.

- 5 I enquired of Jehovah, and he answered me,
and delivered me from all my terrors.
- 6 O look unto him, and ye shall beam with joy,
and your face cannot be abashed.
- 7 This afflicted one cried, and Jehovah heard,
and saved him out of all his troubles.
- 8 The angel of Jehovah encamps round about them that fear him,
and sets them at liberty.
- 9 Taste ye and see that Jehovah is good :
happy the man that takes refuge in him.
- 10 Fear Jehovah, ye his holy ones ;
For they that fear him want nothing.
- 11 Young lions pine and suffer hunger,
but they that enquire after Jehovah cannot want anything good.
- 12 Come, (my) sons, hearken unto me,
I will teach you the fear of Jehovah.
- 13 Who is the man that delights in life,
that loves many days, to see good fortune ?
- 14 Guard thy tongue from evil,
and thy lips from speaking guile.
- 15 Depart from evil, and do good ;
seek peace, and pursue it.
- 17 The face of Jehovah is against them that do evil,
to cut off their memorial from the earth.
- 16 The eyes of Jehovah are towards the righteous,
and his ears are towards their cry.
- 18 They cry, and Jehovah hearkens,
and delivers them out of all their troubles.
- 19 Jehovah is nigh unto the broken in heart,
and saves them that are crushed in spirit.
- 20 Many are the misfortunes of the righteous,
but Jehovah delivers him out of all :
- 21 He keeps all his bones,
not one of them is broken.
- 22 Misfortune shall slay the ungodly,
and the haters of the righteous shall be dealt with as guilty.
- 23 Jehovah sets free the soul of his servants
and none shall be dealt with as guilty that take refuge in him.

5 **From all my terrors.** Comp. xxxi. 14, 'Cause for terror is on all sides.'

6 **O look unto him,** &c. Following Sept. and Pesh. The text nas, 'They looked . . . and were . . . and their faces,' &c. Comp. 'By

thy light do we see light' (xxxvi. 10).

7 **This afflicted one.** Does the psalmist point to some particular poor man whose history was well known (cf. Eccles. ix. 14, 15), or (less probably) to himself (*εὐτελεῖ*)

ὄντα με καὶ προβατέα, Theodoret)? Does he not rather mean any and every member of the jubilant church?

8 **The angel of Jehovah.** This may be the 'angel of Yahvè,' who in parts of Genesis, Exodus, and Judges, which represent a naïve and strongly anthropomorphic theology, is a personal revelation of Yahvè (cf. on cxxxix. 7-10). It is safer, however, both here and in xxxv. 5, 6, to explain the phrase of any one of the angelic host whom God may send for the protection of a believer (or, believers). Comp. the use of 'l'angel di Dio' in Dante and the *Fioretti*. We might also render 'an angel of Jehovah,' but this would suggest that the angels were individuals. No doubt in the visions of the Book of Daniel the angels are individualised; but our psalmist is still at the earlier stage of thought in angelology. (May we infer from 'my God hath sent his angel,' in Dan. vi. 22, that the stories in Daniel are of earlier origin than the visions?)—**Encamps round about.** Comp. Mark v. 9, 'What is *thy* name?' 'Legion; for *we* are many.' It is the leader of an angelic host who is meant.

9 **Taste ye.** So Prov. xxxi. 18, 'She tastes (A.V. perceiveth) that her gain is good.' A popular idiom; there is no reference to that higher food 'che non gustata non s'intende mai' (Dante, *Par.* iii. 38).

10 **His holy ones,** viz. as members of the holy people' (Deut. vii. 6, Isa. lxiii. 12, Dan. viii. 24, xiii. 7, and elsewhere in Daniel), and there-

fore standing in the closest relation to Jehovah. Moral perfection is of course no part of the idea. Comp. on xvi. 3.

12 (**My**) **sons.** The affectionate style of the 'wise men' towards their disciples; comp. Prov. i. 8, ii. 1, &c.

17, 16 These verses are transposed, i.e. the verse beginning with **ב** should precede that with **י** (as in Lam. ii., iv., and in the alphabetic poem at the end of Prov. xxxi. according to the Septuagint). The common arrangement produces an absurdity in *v.* 17. Such transpositions are (need it be said?) not unfrequently necessary in ancient texts (see on xii. 9, 8, Isa. viii. 22, 21), and we sometimes feel certain of them (see Nowack on Prov. iv. 16-19). The study of the Septuagint will confirm this statement. It may seem strange that the *Pe*-stanza should precede that beginning with *Ayin*, but remember that *Pe* = mouth, and *Ayin* = eye, so that the order of these was a matter of indifference. The same phenomenon occurs in Lam. ii.-iv.

17 **To cut off their memorial,** i.e. their name (xxx. 5)—a terrible threat to those who identified the continuance of existence with the perpetuation of the family. See Job xviii. 17.

19 **The broken in heart . . . crushed in spirit,** i.e. the despondent; comp. the same or similar phrases in li. 19 (where penitence is also implied), cix. 16, 22, Prov. xv. 13, Isa. lvii. 15 (note), lxvi. 2.

PSALM XXXV.

THE psalm falls into three parts, closing at *v.* 10, *v.* 18, and *v.* 28, but it is only the first two in which some logical development can be traced—the last repeats with some variation expressions in the earlier portion. It is a prayer for deliverance from base and cruel persecutors, who partly consist of Israelites, partly of foreigners (see on *v.* 15); cf. introd. to Ps. xxii. The psalmist himself may be a leading Israelite, who suffered more than others, and draws some of his details from personal experience, if it is not safer to regard the individualising features as poetical ornament. At any rate this is in some sense undoubtedly a national psalm, and we can on

this ground more easily excuse its imprecations. Israel was the vessel to which was committed the precious treasure of the true religion. If at any point of history imprecation was justified, it was justified in times when the fate of pure religion seemed trembling in the balance. Note, however, with Bishop Alexander 'the 'gentle undertones, breathings of beneficent love,' which relieve the fierceness of the imprecatory passages.

This is one of a group of psalms which have numerous points of contact, both among themselves and with Jeremiah and Lamentations. Comp. with Hitzig *v.* 6 with Jer. xxiii. 12 ; *v.* 12 with Jer. xviii. 20 ; *vv.* 21 *b*, 25 with Lam. ii. 16 ; and the expressions rendered 'my fall' (*v.* 15) and 'them that implead me' (*v.* 1) with Jer. xx. 10, xviii. 19. Besides which cf. *vv.* 4, 26 with xl. 15 ; *v.* 17 with xxii. 21 ; *vv.* 17, 18 with xxii. 23, 26, xl. 10, 11 ; *vv.* 21, 27 with xl. 16, 17 ; *v.* 12 with xxxviii. 21 ; *vv.* 14, 15 with xxxviii. 7, 18 ; *vv.* 21, 27 with xl. 16, 17 ; *v.* 13 with lxix. 11, 12 ; *v.* 28 with lxxi. 24.

- 1 Plead my cause, Jehovah, with them that implead me ;
fight against them that fight against me.
- 2 Take hold of shield and buckler,
and stand up as my helper :
- 3 Draw spear and dirk to meet my pursuers ;
say unto my soul, I am thy salvation.
- 4 Put to shame and dishonoured be they that seek my soul,
turned backward and abashed be they that devise my hurt ;
- 5 Be they as chaff before the wind,
and the angel of Jehovah pursuing them ;
- 6 Be their way dark and slippery,
and the angel of Jehovah thrusting them :—
- 7 Since without cause have they hid for me their net,
without cause have they dug a pit for my soul :—
- 8 Ruin beset him unawares,
and his net which he hath hidden, let it catch himself !
- 9 And my soul shall exult in Jehovah :
full joyous shall it be at his salvation ;
- 10 All my bones shall say,
Jehovah, who is like unto thee,
who deliverest the afflicted from a stronger than he,
yea, the afflicted and needy from him that spoils him !
- 11 There arise unjust witnesses ;
of things that I know not do they question me.
- 12 They reward me evil for good ;
bereavement is come to my soul.
- 13 But I—when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth,
I afflicted my soul with fasting,
and my prayer—mayest thou recompense it into mine own
bosom.

¹ *Bampton Lectures on the Psalms*, p. 53.

- 14 I went about as though it had been my friend or my brother,
I bowed down in mourning weeds, as one that lamented for
his mother.
- 15 But at my fall they rejoice, and gather together :
aliens whom I know not gather together against me,
and cry out unceasingly ;
- 16 Among profane mockers
they gnash upon me with their teeth.
- 17 Lord, how long wilt thou look on ?
recover my soul from their roaring,
my dear life from the young lions.
- 18 I will give thanks unto thee in the great congregation,
I will praise thee among much people.
- 19 Let not them rejoice over me that are for a lie mine enemies,
they that for no cause hate me—let them not wink with the eye.
- 20 For it is not peace that they speak ;
but they frame deceitful plots against the quiet in the land ;
- 21 And they open their mouth wide upon me,
they say, Aha, aha, our eye has seen it.
- 22 Thou seest it, Jehovah; keep not silence,
Lord, be not far from me.
- 23 Rouse thee and awake for my just right,
my God and my Lord, for my cause.
- 24 Right me, according to thy righteousness, Jehovah my God,
and let them not rejoice over me.
- 25 Let them not say in their heart, Aha, our lust (is given us);
let them not say, We have swallowed him up.
- 26 Put to shame and abashed together
be they that rejoice at my misfortune :
clothed with shame and dishonour
be they that show me insolence.
- 27 Let them ring out a glad cry
that have pleasure in my righteous cause :
and continually, Jehovah be magnified,
who delights in the welfare of his servant ;
- 28 And my tongue shall speak musingly of thy righteousness,
all the day long of thy praise.

I Plead my cause. A favourite legal figure explained by the poet in the next line. War was regarded as an appeal to the divine justice, and conversely divine judgments were a kind of 'fighting from heaven.' Comp. Isa. xxxiv. 5.

2 As my helper. Not 'for

mine help,' as A.V. and R.V. The shade of meaning is not too delicate even for an English reader. God's nature is to help; 'stand up' then 'in their essential character.' This is the first example of the so-called *Beth essentialæ*—the 'in' which is prefixed to an *essential* quality; see

xxxvii. 20, xxxix. 6, lxviii. 5 (?), liv. 6, cxviii. 7, and consult Müller, *Hebrew Syntax*, § 52; Ewald, *Lehrbuch der hebr. Sprache*, § 217 b, 299 b, *Gram. Arab.*, § 583.

3 **And dirk** (so Horsley). The ordinary rendering is 'and stop (the way)', which is doubtless intended by the vowel-points but which does not suit the following preposition, and is decidedly less natural than the rendering adopted. The view that *s-g-r* is a 'weapon of war' is already mentioned by Kimchi, and in fact has the authority of Parchon, and among the moderns of Drusius, Grotius, Vitringa, Michaelis, Ewald, Bickell, and our own Kennicott, who remarks, 'סנר or סנר is the *σάγαις* or scimitar; הריק influences the word as well as הנית "the lance."' I adopt this view, pointing סנר with Bickell. The *σάγαις* was the usual weapon of the Scythians (Herod. i. 214), and Sayce compares it to the short dagger worn by the warriors on the 'Hittite' sculptures. It was also used by the Persians and other races of the interior of Asia (Xenophon, *Anab.* iv. 4; *Cyrop.* i. 2, 9, &c.) The objection of course is that the Jews are not known to have employed it. It is hardly sufficient to answer that the Hebrew literature is most incompletely preserved; we have such frequent references to weapons that a *ἀπ. λεγ.* in the pre-Exile literature is improbable. It is not likely that the Jews picked up the word (and the object?) during the Scythian incursions, for the strong probability is that the Scythians spared the territory of Judah. I can only suppose either that this is an archaic word, used long ago in the times of the Hittite empire (?) in Palestine, and revived by a writer fond of archaisms, or that it was picked up in the early part of the cosmopolitan period of the Jews during or after the Exile.

5 **The angel of Jehovah.** No common angel, but the leader of a host is meant (see on xxxiv. 8).—**Pursuing them.** A bolder statement than in 5 *a* (cf. Isa. xvii. 13); but from the winds to the

angels there is but a step (civ. 4). The Korán (lxxix. 1) has the same conception in a more advanced stage—'By those (angels) who tear out (souls) violently.' The Mas. text makes 'pursuing' and 'thrusting' (see next verse) change places to the detriment of the imagery. The correction is suggested by the parallel passage, Jer. xxxiii. 12. Comp. also the displacement in *v.* 7 (crit. note).

6 **Dark and slippery.** Imitating Jer., *l.c.*

8 Here the foes are regarded collectively. Comp. line 1 with Isa. xlvii. 11, and line 2 with vii. 16, ix. 16. The text gives a very feeble third line—'with ruin let him fall into it'—probably a marginal gloss explaining in what the 'ruin' spoken of in line 1 consisted. Segond's rendering, 'qu'ils y tombent et périssent,' is arbitrary. I need not chronicle the various desperate resources of ancient and modern interpreters.

10 **All my bones, &c.,** i.e. my entire being, body and soul. Comp. li. 10, and see on vi. 3.—**Who is like unto thee?** viz. among the gods or supernatural beings (see on lxxvi. 8, and cf. lxxi. 19, lxxxix. 9, also Ex. xv. 11, and the proper names Micaiah, Michael). The question expresses a believer's strong conviction that his God, if not the only supernatural Power, is yet supreme, and beyond comparison great.

11 **Unjust witnesses** (*μάρτυρες ἄδικοι*, Sept.), equivalent to the 'false witnesses' of xxvii. 12 (see note). The same phrase occurs in Ex. xxiii. 1, Deut. xix. 16. Persecution is compared to bringing a false accusation against the righteous, in accordance with the figure in *v.* 1.

13 Cf. lxix. 11, 12. **My clothing was sackcloth,** the 'sackcloth of my prayer,' in Baruch's fuller phraseology (Bar. iv. 20).—**I afflicted my soul** (i.e. as a means of atonement). This characteristic ritual phrase seems already on the road to supplanting the simpler expres-

sion 'to fast.' I say 'on the road,' for the poet at once explains it by the words 'with fasting.' Comp. my note on Isa. lviii. 3. — **And my prayer,** &c. 'My prayer was so full of unselfish brotherly love that it deserved a recompense, or at least a recognition. That which man denies, do thou, O God, vouchsafe to grant!' This involves an easy correction. 'Into my bosom' (i.e. into the folds of the garment used as a pocket) reminds us of lxxix. 12, Jer. xxxii. 18, Isa. lkv. 6, 7. The verse most probably consists of two distichs; it is the taking it for a tristich of parallel lines which has wrought confusion in the exegesis, and led even Delitzsch to think that 'my prayer returned into my bosom' (so he renders the received text) can possibly mean 'I prayed with my head bent on my breast.' If, however, we cling to the text, it seems best to render (comparing the ἀποστραφήσεται of Sept.), 'and my prayer—let it return into mine own bosom,' i.e. let it be recompensed by the great Judge. Less probably Riehm, 'and my prayer returned (empty) into my own bosom (possession),' comparing Matt. x. 13, Luke x. 6.

14 **In mourning.** Lit., 'in black.' Black was the mourning colour with Jews and Arabs, being significant of the infernal regions (Ewald, *Antiquities*, p. 60, n. 5). (It is noted as an exception when certain Caliphs chose white as the mourning hue.)

15 **At my fall.** Literally, 'at my bending to one side;' as xxxviii. 18, Job xviii. 12 (cf. xii. 5), Jer. xx. 10. — **Aliens.** The text has the strange form *nēkīm*, which might mean 'afflicted ones.' In 2 Sam. v. 6, the taunting Jebusites represent the blind and the lame as a match for David; and Jeremiah might,

with some want of simplicity, speak of 'afflicted ones' as thinking themselves strong enough to overthrow him. But, unless the text be infallible, Olshausen's correction is obvious (cf. xviii. 45, 46).

16 **Profane mockers.** 'Profane,' because, in mocking at a believer, they do despite to Jehovah. There is one untranslatable word in the received text which is obviously corrupt. Perowne renders, 'With them that are profane in their outlandish mouthings' (representing strange Hebrew by unusual English). De Witt, 'They were like vile babblers for a dainty morsel' (parasites). But 'profane' should certainly not have been weakened into 'vile.' The reason, of course, was that 'profane parasites' is an impossible phrase.

17, 18 See on xxii. 21, 23, 26.

20 **The quiet in the land.** The sense is clear, though the adjective occurs only here. Those who have found 'rest' or 'quiet' (see Isa. xxviii. 12, Heb.) in Jehovah will also have rest from evil devices. The Peshitto has 'the lowly of the land.' The antithesis is 'the ungodly of the land,' ci. 8.

25 **Our lust** (rendering as lxxviii. 18) Literally, 'our soul.' The 'soul' or 'life' of the oppressed was a dainty morsel for their 'soul.' — **We have swallowed him up.** So Lam. ii. 16; cf. lli. 6; and for the figure, note in Cambridge Bible on Mic. ii. 2.

28 **Shall speak musingly,** in the low murmur of one entranced by a sweet thought. Strictly, either 'shall murmur,' or 'shall meditate' (meditation being regarded as something nearer to speech than to silence), but poetically = 'shall speak,' but implying that meditation accompanies the speech. So xxxvii. 30, lxxi. 20; cf. on lii. 2.

PSALM XXXVI.

PROBABLY we have here parts of two psalms, for the connexion suggested between *v.* 4 and *v.* 5 is artificial. Comp. on Pss. xix., xxiv., xxvii. The appended psalm consists of three stanzas of three distichs each.

- 2 [That 'God is not,'] is Sin's own oracle
to the ungodly man within his heart ;
no dread of Elohim is before his eyes.
- 3 For He treats him gently, so he imagines,
touching the finding of his guilt.
- 4 The words of his mouth are mischief and guile ;
he has left off to act wisely and well.
- 5 He devises mischief upon his bed ;
he sets himself in no good way ;
he does not abhor evil.
- (*Another Psalm.*)
- 6 Jehovah, thy lovingkindness touches the heavens ;
thy faithfulness reaches unto the skies.
- 7 Thy righteousness is like the mountains of God ;
thy judgments are (like) the great abyss.
Man and beast savest thou, Jehovah :
- 8 How precious is thy lovingkindness, Elohim !
[in thee] do the children of men [put their trust],
in the shadow of thy wings they find refuge ;
- 9 They feast upon the fatness of thy house ;
and of the river of thy pleasures thou givest them their drink.
- 10 For with thee is the fountain of life ;
by thy light do we see light.
- 11 O continue thy lovingkindness unto them that know thee,
and thy righteousness to the upright in heart.
- 12 Let not the foot of pride come upon me,
and let not the hand of the wicked make me a wanderer.
- 13 There are the workers of mischief fallen :
they are thrust down, and are not able to rise.

2 **That 'God is not'** . . . The opening words are very happily supplied by Olshausen from xiv. 1 (comp. on xci. 1). Sin (or rather, Apostasy) is boldly personified as a quasi-divine power within the man who has 'fallen away' from the true God (comp. Zech. v. 8, Gen. iv. 7). Practical atheism is meant, which from one point of view is folly (xiv. 1), and from another is the suggestion, if we may say so, of an evil power, an Ahriman. Comp. lviii. 12 *b*.

3 **For He treats him gently,** &c. The sense of this much-tor-

mented passage is clear, so soon as we omit the corrupt and intrusive word in the Heb. of line 2 (see crit. note). 'In his eyes' (end of *l.* 1) can only mean 'in the man's eyes.' There would be no sense in saying that God was either the subject or the object of any action merely 'in His eyes' (i.e. in his imagination).—**Finding**, viz. with a view to punish (Gen. xlv. 16). God, if there be a God, is an inert, apathetic Being, according to the ungodly man (comp. on x. 4, 11).

6 Here begins a very fine hymn on the divine attributes (or let us

rather say, 'name'), which gains greatly by being viewed separately from *vv.* 2-5. Possibly those who combined the two passages (*vv.* 2-5 and 6-13) intended to suggest to us a contrast between the serene atmosphere of God's 'philanthropy' (Tit. iii. 4) and the stormy passions of ungodly men, also between the low conception of a purely transcendent and therefore practically non-existent God formed by the wicked man (*vv.* 2, 3), and the high truth of a God who by His own will is immanent in the world of humanity. Comp. lvii. 10, ciii. 11.

7 The mention of the heavens suggests the 'sky-pointing peaks' (Coleridge), to which the **great abyss** (*ἄβυσσος πολλή*, Sept.) of the ocean—see on lxxi. 20—forms an antithesis.—**The mountains of God** (so l. 10); the mountains being above all other objects (except the finest specimens of tree-life, lxxx. 11; comp. civ. 16) monuments of the greatness of the Creator (see note on xc. 2). To explain with Calvin, 'scimus divinum vocari quidquam excellit,' exaggerates the fact without in the least accounting for it.—**Thy judgments**—in their various effects of destruction and salvation. There is no need to suppose a reference to the Flood, though the first line of our *v.* 7 has suggested this to some; the saviourship of God is not limited to a single extraordinary crisis.—**Man and beast**, &c. On this fine passage see Keble (*Prælectiones*, ii. 458), who compares *Æsch. Suppl.* In his delicate criticism, however, he does not notice that the psalmist shares the feeling of St. Francis¹ that there is, morally speaking, no complete break of continuity in the scale of sentient life (all degrees being gifted with a 'soul,' Gen. i.) Lions and dogs have their moral relatives among men (see on xxii.

13), and so too the mild domesticated animals to whom the psalmist here refers under the name *ḅhēmāh* (see on lxxiv. 19). The latter are in fact regarded as a part of the human community (Jer. xxi. 6; comp. Jon. iv. 11); the 'desert-beasts' form a 'folk' by themselves (lxxiv. 14).

8 The stanza which opens here mentions the peculiar privilege of the 'sons of men'—conscious communion with Jehovah. The text reads (after 'Elohim'), 'and the children of men take refuge,' &c., an extremely awkward explanatory clause ('and' = in fact). But the *waw* before *ḅnē ādhām* is probably to be explained as a fragment of a verb (3rd plur. perf.); experience shows that such fragments of readings are often preserved (see, e.g., Cornill's edition of Ezekiel).—**In the shadow of thy wings**, &c. See the exquisite parallel, Ruth ii. 12. The figure is that of the eagle (see on xci. 4). So lvii. 2, lxi. 5; cf. xvii. 8.

9 **The fatness of thy house**. See on xxiii. 5, 6, xxvii. 4, lxxv. 5. Gesenius strangely, 'semel de universo mundo.'—**River**. *Nakhal*, an everflowing stream (see *v.* 10 a), as Am. v. 24.

10 **The fountain of life**. Cf. Jer. xvii. 13. No doubt psalmist and prophet have spiritualised an expression of common speech (see Prov. xiv. 22). But whither shall we look for the origin of the phrase—to outward nature or to mythology? Surely to the latter. In Prov., *l.c.*, 'a fountain of life' is exactly synonymous with 'a tree of life,' and we know that *this* phrase belongs to Hebrew mythology (cf. Ewald, *Hist.*, i. 37, 40). Moreover, in the latest Biblical recast of mythic material we actually find, not only the tree (or, trees) of life, but a 'river of water of life' (Rev.

¹ Herder has by anticipation vindicated the Israelites from the charge of want of sympathy towards animals brought against them by Schopenhauer. Putting aside the Levitical Law, the evidence is all in the direction opposed to this biased thinker's view. The Hebrew writers will seem to have hit the right mean between inhumanity and sentimentalism. We nowhere in the O. T. meet with those touching extravagances reported to us in chaps. xxi., xxii. of the *Fioretti di San Francesco*.

xxii. 1, 2). Our only description of the Hebrew Paradise, it is true, says nothing of the 'waters of life;' but the description is not intended to be complete, and Chaldean mythology (see the *Descent of Istar*) knows of waters as well as of a tree of life. (Comp. also Ralston's *Russian Folk-tales*.)—**By thy light** (comp. xliii. 3). Orientals still have an intense fondness for light, and this is equally true of the Jews, as the Biblical imagery shows. The lower light is essential to the lower life ('the light of life,' lvi. 13; cf. xlix. 20), and the higher light to the higher life (comp. John i. 4). The link between the two is represented mythically by the essential light in which God dwells (civ. 2; comp. 1 Tim. vi. 16, and the Assyrian hymn in which the Creator is called 'lord of light'). The 'light' which the psalmist sees,

and hopes still to see, is the 'light' of that joy and peace which spring from the sense of God's favour, and which are better even than those visible mercies of which they give the assurance (see on iv. 7). Sept. renders, *ὀψόμεθα φῶς*, implying the hope of immortality. Comp. *Psalm. Sol.* iii. 16, *καὶ ἡ ζωὴ αὐτῶν ἐν φωτὶ κυρίου καὶ οὐκ ἐκλείψει ἔτι*.

11, 12 The psalmist appropriates his personal share in God's covenanted lovingkindness (*khésed*) implies a covenant; see on iv. 4).—**Make me a wanderer**. The word certainly refers to exile, as an imminent danger to the community (see 2 Kings xxi. 8, and comp. Gen. iv. 12, 14).

13 The psalmist dramatically represents the overthrow of the wicked as having just taken place ('there' is demonstrative, so that xiv. 5 is hardly parallel).

PSALM XXXVII.

'IN respect of warmth of contents and inner connexion, this is one of the best of the alphabetic psalms' (Ewald). It should be read together with Pss. xxxix., lxxiii. Observe (1) the respect for poverty, so unknown to the *Vedic* hymn-writers, and (2) the insistence on the doctrine (the half-truth, as we should call it) of earthly retribution; note also the points of contact between this psalm and the Book of Job. The awful mystery of divine Providence is more superficially treated here than in that great poem, and also than in Ps. lxxiii.

The psalm is for the most part in quatrains or double verses, beginning with the successive letters of the alphabet. A glance will show, however, that here and there a stanza is too short or too long. In one case this want of symmetry can be corrected with certainty (see on v. 28).

- 1 Be not thou incensed at the evildoers,
neither be thou envious against them that work injustice;
- 2 For they shall quickly fade away as the grass,
and wither even as the green herb.
- 3 Trust thou in Jehovah, doing that which is good;
dwell in the land, cherishing faithfulness;
- 4 Then shalt thou have sweet pleasure in Jehovah,
and he shall grant thee thy heart's petitions.
- 5 Roll (the care of thy way) upon Jehovah,
trust in him, and he shall do nobly,
- 6 And shall bring forth thine innocence as the light,
and thy just right as the noonday.

- 7 Be at rest towards Jehovah, and wait on for him ;
be not incensed at one whose career prospers,
at the man who brings to pass knaveries.
- 8 Cease from anger, and forsake wrath,
be not incensed—it would lead only to evildoing ;
- 9 For evildoers shall be cut off,
but they that await Jehovah—those shall inherit the land.
- 10 Yet a little while, and the ungodly will be gone ;
thou shalt look after his place, but he will be away ;
- 11 But the afflicted shall inherit the land,
and have sweet pleasure in the abundance of peace.
- 12 The ungodly plots against the righteous,
and gnashes upon him with his teeth :
- 13 The Lord laughs at him,
for he sees that his day is coming.
- 14 The ungodly draw the sword and bend their bow
to slay the afflicted and needy,
to murder such as are upright in way.
- 15 Their sword shall enter into their own heart,
and their bows shall be broken.
- 16 Better is the righteous man's little
than the opulence of many ungodly ;
- 17 For the arms of the ungodly shall be broken,
but Jehovah upholds the righteous.
- 18 Jehovah takes notice of the days of the blameless,
and their inheritance shall be for ever.
- 19 They shall not be shamed in the evil time,
and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied.
- 20 For the ungodly shall perish,
and Jehovah's enemies shall be as the splendour of the
meadows :
they shall vanish as smoke, they shall vanish.
- 21 The ungodly borrows, and cannot pay it back,
but the righteous shows pity and gives.
- 22 For his blessed ones shall inherit the land,
but his cursed ones shall be cut off.
- 23 It comes of Jehovah that a man's steps are established,
and he takes delight in his way.
- 24 Though he fall, he shall not remain prostrate,
for Jehovah upholds his hand.

- 25 I have been young, and now am old,
and I have never seen a righteous man forsaken,
or his seed begging their bread.
- 26 He is ever showing pity, and lending,
and his seed is blessed.
- 27 Depart from evil, and do good,
and thou shalt dwell for evermore.
- 28 For Jehovah is the friend of justice,
and forsakes not his loving ones.
- The unrighteous shall be destroyed for ever,
and the seed of the ungodly shall be cut off ;
- 29 The righteous shall inherit the land,
and dwell therein for ever.
- 30 The mouth of the righteous speaks musingly of wisdom,
and his tongue utters just things.
- 31 The law of his God is in his heart,
his steps shall not be unsteady.
- 32 The ungodly watches the righteous,
and seeks to slay him.
- 33 Jehovah will not leave him in his hand,
nor condemn him when he is accused.
- 34 Wait for Jehovah, and observe his way,
and he shall exalt thee, that thou inherit the land :
when the ungodly are cut off, thou shalt see it.
- 35 I have seen the ungodly inspiring awe,
and spreading himself like a cedar of Lebanon.
- 36 I passed by, and lo, he was gone :
I searched for him, but he could not be found.
- 37 Observe the blameless man, and behold the upright,
how there is a posterity to the man of peace.
- 38 But transgressors shall be destroyed together :
the posterity of the ungodly shall be cut off.
- 39 The salvation of the righteous is of Jehovah :
he is their asylum in the time of trouble ;
- 40 And Jehovah helps and delivers them,
he delivers them from the ungodly, and saves them,
because they take refuge in him.

He deprecates, not righteous anger, but a murmuring discontent, of which Job has given the typical expression. Of course few pious Israelites would adopt Job's style; but the unspoken thought here re-proved is virtually that of Job in his agony. Not to 'trust in Jehovah' as a moral governor (*v.* 3) is virtually to say 'there is no God' (*x.* 4).—**Envious.** See on lxxiii. 3.

3 **Dwell in the land**, i.e. do not seek to make thy fortune in other lands. Schultens and Ewald explain *v.* 3*b* as a promise, 'thou shalt dwell (undisturbed; comp. *v.* 29, and Jer. xxv. 5, xxxv. 15, Heb.), and have safe pasture.' This seems forced.

4 **Then shalt thou have . . .** Delitzsch, 'and have thy (pleasure),' making the apodosis begin in the next line. This is opposed by Job xxii. 26, xxvii. 10, Isa. lviii. 14.

5 **Roll (the care of);** see on xxii. 9. 'Way' = life's journey.

7 **Be at rest, &c.** Or, look in stillness towards (see on lxii. 2).

9 **Shall inherit the land.** So *vv.* 11, 22, 29, 34. See on xxv. 13. *V.* 11 seems to be spiritualised in Matt. v. 5 (τῆν γῆν = the new earth; see on *v.* 29).

11 **The afflicted;** or, 'the lowly.' 'Who seeth not,' says Mede, 'that by meek is here meant the opposite party to the wicked?' (*Works*, p. 161.) Hitzig, not amiss, 'die Frommen.' Better, 'die frommen Dulder.' See on ix. 13.

13 **His day**, i.e. the day of the man's death; comp. 1 Sam. xxvi. 10, 'or his day come that he die.'

19 Note the parallelism with Job v. 19, 20.

20 **As the splendour of the meadows.** As the gay and perfumed but shortlived blossoms of Sharon or Esdraelon. A charming and suggestive phrase; the play upon sound, however, is lost in the English. Comp. 'plants of Naaman,' Isa. xvii. 10 (note).

21 Comp. cxii. 5*a*; Deut. xv. 6, xxviii. 12, 44.

22 Understand, Jehovah will reward them to the uttermost.

23, 24 Comp. Prov. xx. 24, xvi. 9, xxiv. 16, Jer. x. 23.

25 Comp. Prov. x. 3, xiii. 25. Such passages illustrate 1 Tim. iv. 8.

28 Auth. Vers. follows the received text; the correction suggested to Lowth by the Sept. is certain. As the text stands, there is no stanza beginning with *Ayin*, and the *Samech* stanza is too long.

29 **The righteous, &c.** The only Biblical passage quoted in the Korán (Sur. xxi. 105), but Mohammed interprets of the new earth (see on *v.* 11).

33 **Nor condemn him.** The world may do so, but Jehovah will pass a different judgment. Comp. on cix. 7*b*.

35, 36 Comp. lli. 7, Job v. 3.

Like a cedar of Lebanon. Comp. Hos. xiv. 5, 'and shall cast out his roots like (the cedars of) Lebanon' (note parallel line). The received text (with which Targ. agrees) has, 'like a native, fresh-green (tree).' A unique expression, for 'ezrahk ('native') is elsewhere only used of men, but if allowable, at any rate only in poetic style. The psalmist, however, has not himself a poetic style, though he may conceivably have borrowed from some unknown and more poetical writer. But why should the attributes of indigenous birth and sappiness or fresh green be combined? Are not 'native-born' trees struck by lightning or cut down, as well as others? Or are such trees more spreading than others? (We have no right, with Del., to make 'ezrahk = primeval).

37 **Blameless.** One might almost render 'quiet,' remembering Gen. xxv. 27 (if Dillmann be right). In parallel line, 'man of peace' occurs.—**A posterity.** Or, 'sequel' (comp. 'make our beginning and our sequell truth,' T. Middleton, 1597): a good man's 'sequel' or 'after-life' being in his children.

38*b* Comp. Job xviii. 13-20.

PSALM XXXVIII.

ALPHABETIC so far as the number of the distichs goes (see crit. note on v. 12). The speaker represents suffering Israel (comp. Lam. iii.), who, though 'following after good' (v. 21), cannot be sinless before God.

- 2 Jehovah, reprove me not in thine indignation,
neither correct me in thy hot displeasure.
- 3 For thine arrows have sunk into me,
and upon me has sunk thy hand.
- 4 There is no soundness in my flesh for thy fervent ire,
no health in my bones because of my sin :
- 5 For mine iniquities are gone over my head,
as a heavy burden they are too heavy for me.
- 6 My weals are become noisome and fester, because of my
foolishness ;
- 7 I am bent double, I am bowed down greatly,
I go about in mourning weeds all the day long.
- 8 For my loins are filled with burning ;
and there is no soundness in my flesh.
- 9 I am benumbed and crushed exceedingly ;
I roar for the disquiet of my heart.
- 10 Lord, before thee is all my desire,
and my sighing is not hid from thee :
- 11 My heart throbs quickly, my strength has forsaken me,
even the light of mine eyes is gone from me.
- 12 My lovers and my friends stand aloof from my plague,
and my kinsmen stand afar off,
- 13 And they that seek my soul lay snares ;
and they that are zealous for my harm speak of utter destruction,
and brood upon deceits all the day long.
- 14 But I am as a deaf man and hear not,
and as a dumb man that opens not his mouth.
- 15 Yea, I am become as a man that hears not,
and in whose mouth are no rejoinders.
- 16 Yea, for thee, Jehovah, do I wait ;
Thou wilt answer, O Lord my God.
- 17 For I said, (I fear) lest they should rejoice over me ;
when my foot wavers they become insolent toward me.
- 18 For I indeed am ready to fall,
and my pain is continually before me ;

- 19 (For I have to confess my guilt ;
I am distressed because of my sin :)
- 20 Whilst they that without a cause are mine enemies are strong,
and they that hate me lyngly are many in number ;
- 21 They also that render evil for good
are adverse to me because I follow after good.
- 22 Forsake me not, Jehovah ;
O my God, be not far from me.
- 23 Speed to my help,
O Lord my salvation.

2 See on vi. 2 (one word only different).

3 **Thine arrows.** It is an image for bodily sickness ; vii. 14 is therefore not so strictly parallel as Job vi. 4, xvi. 13.—**Thy hand.** Comp. xxxii. 4.

4 **No soundness, &c.** Comp. the description of Israel in Isa. i. 5, 6.

5 The figure is taken first of all from overflowing waters (comp. lxix. 3, 16), then from a crushing load such as even an Eastern *hammāl* cannot carry (cf. Gen. iv. 13).—**Mine iniquities,** or, the punishment of my sins (see on xxxi. 11).

6 **My foolishness,** i.e. my sin.

‘He that misseth Wisdom (i.e. true religion) wrongeth his own self’ (Prov. viii. 37). Cf. cvii. 17 (?).

9 **Crushed.** In xlv. 19 the pious Israelites, individually, are said to have been ‘crushed.’ Hence the phrase may well be used of a representative Israelite (so li. 10).

12 See on xxxi. 12. **Lovers,** i.e., perhaps, Israel’s friendly neighbours ; comp. Jer. xxx. 14, Lam. i. 2, 19.

14, 15 Comp. the description of the suffering Servant in Isa. liii. 7.

19 **I have to confess** (see on next psalm). The idiom as in Job ix. 29, ‘I am to be guilty ;’ Jer. xxxvi. 16.

PSALM XXXIX.

THIS psalm has been called ‘the most beautiful of all the elegies in the Psalter.’ With all its exquisite individualising touches, it is an admirable church-hymn, as it mirrors the experiences of all faithful Israelites. This view is confirmed by the parallels in Ps. xxxviii. ; comp. *vv.* 3, 10 with xxxviii. 14, 15 ; *v.* 8 with xxxviii. 16 ; *v.* 11 with xxxviii. 3. There are also points of contact with Ps. lxii.—the idea of the nothingness of human life, and the fondness for the particle which expresses triumphant faith (78). A refrain marks out the two divisions of the psalm.

- 2 I said, ‘Let me take heed to my ways,
that I mistake not with my tongue ;
let me put a bridle on my mouth
while the ungodly is still before me.’
- 3 I became mutely resigned, I kept silence afar from happiness,
but my pain was stirred up

- 4 My heart was hot within me ;
as I mused, the fire kindled ;
(at last) I spake with my tongue.
- 5 ' Make me, O Jehovah, to know mine end,
and the measure of my days, what it is ;
let me know how short my time is.
- 6 Behold, thou hast made my days (a few) hand-breadths long,
and my lifetime is as nothing before thee :
surely every man is vanity.
- 7 Surely in mere semblance man walks to and fro ;
surely for mere vanity are they so boisterous :
he piles up, and cannot tell who will gather it.
- 8 And now, Lord, what wait I for ?
my hope is in thee.
- 9 Deliver me from all my transgressions :
make me not the reproach of the fool.
- 10 I am become mute, and open not my mouth,
for thou hast done it.
- 11 O remove thy plague from off me ;
I am wasted away with the onset of thy hand.
- 12 With rebukes for iniquity when thou dost chasten a man,
thou destroyest, like the moth, his desirable things ;
surely every man is vanity.
- 13 Hear my prayer, Jehovah, and give ear unto my cry,
hold not thy peace at my tears :
for I am a guest with thee,
and a sojourner like all my fathers.
- 14 Avert thy frown, that I may smile again,
before I go hence, and be no more.'

2 That I mistake not. The power of saying the right word at the right time is essential to a worthy character, according to Prov. xv. 23, xxv. 11. To fail in this, was to 'miss one's aim,' or, as I have rendered, to 'mistake.' The same word is used in xxv. 8 (see note), also in Judg. xx. 16 (Hifil) of archers missing their mark.—

While the ungodly, &c. Partly because the sufferer would not willingly give occasion to the enemy to blaspheme, and so injure the cause of his God, partly because by 'envying the evildoers' (xxxvii. 1) he will still further excite the divine

anger against himself. True, he is already 'wasted away' with 'rebukes for iniquity' (*vv.* 10, 11); but whereas the 'iniquity' as yet is a 'hidden one' (see introd. to Ps. xxxii.), the cause for a further punishment would be only too patent.

3 I became mutely resigned. Lit., 'I became mute in stillness,' i.e. either the stillness of the grave (so Hitzig; comp. xciv. 17), or that of pious resignation (as Delitzsch); comp. xxxvii. 7, lxii. 2). At any rate, Bickell is venturesome in omitting *dūmīyyāh* as otiose.

5 Make me . . . to know, &c.

This may well have been the language of an individual, but, from the point of view of the Psalter (see on cii. 12), it is equally applicable to a nation. Even a plain reader, like the late Lord Shaftesbury, saw this when he remarked at Antwerp, quoting this verse, 'Let us Englishmen take warning.' But why does the speaker, whether an individual or Israel personified, or even both, pray for this? That he may not set his affection on earthly greatness and prosperity, but on Him 'whose lovingkindness is better than life itself.' Oppressed as he is by the rich and prosperous ungodly, he may too easily be tempted to envy their wealth. *Vv.* 5-7 directly meet this temptation (see on lxii. 10).—**How short my time is.** Comp. lxxxix. 48. The text-reading is rendered, 'how frail I am;' but see crit. note.

6 Comp. this verse and *v.* 7 with lxii. 10.—**Surely.** Or, 'only' (see on lxxiii. 1).—**Vanity;** lit., 'a breath.'

7 **In mere semblance.** (Not, 'in a shadow;' see crit. note.) Strictly, 'in the character, or manner, of an image (xxxv. 2); i.e. not 'imagineis (instar) Quam reddid æquor vitreum' (G. Buchanan), nor yet 'like a sculptured image,' a meaning which is neither suitable here nor in lxxiii. 20. In the latter passage, 'image' is parallel to 'dream.' This suggests that *çélem*, like *εἶδωλον* and *imago*, and like the Egyptian *ka*,¹ has two senses—

(1) an image formed by art, (2) a phantom seen in a vision or dream. Piscator (1646), 'Vita hominis non est vere vita, sed tantum imago et inanis larva vitæ.' Comp. Woolner, 'All is but coloured show' (*A Beautiful Lady*), and the well-known passage in Soph. *Ajax*, 126.

9 **From all my transgressions.** He means, from their punishment. So 1 Chron. xxix. 15; see on *v.* 5, xv. 1.

13 **Hold not thy peace.** Cf. xxviii. 1, xxxv. 22. A change of fortune is a word of God (lxv. 6). The poet finely adds 'at my tears,'

... the saddest, sweetest, lowest sound,
Nearest akin to perfect silence.²

—**A guest . . . a sojourner,** i.e. only a short time here and dependent on Jehovah's protection. So 1 Chron. xxix. 15; see on *v.* 5, xv. 1. The words are the technical expressions for the foreign 'half-citizens' of Israel (Ewald, *Antiquities*, p. 236, note 9). It is not merely a figure which the psalmist employs, but a representation of fact. The Israelites were Jehovah's feudatories. 'The land is mine; for ye are guests and sojourners with me' (Lev. xxv. 23).

14 **Avert thy frown.** Lit., 'look away from me' (cf. Job vii. 19, xiv. 6).—**That I may smile;** lit., that I may gleam (like the sky when the clouds are dispelled), i.e. recover my cheerfulness (as Job ix. 27, x. 20).

PSALM XL.

Two if not three poets seem to have been concerned in this psalm as it has come down to us. The first of these regards Israel's great deliverance (from Babylon?) upon the bright side as the reward of its fidelity to its God; the other two (if we admit three poets) as only a first stage in the divine interposition, Israel being in their time as much afflicted as ever before. To the first belong *vv.* 2-12; to the second, *vv.* 14-18; while a third, perhaps, unites the two by inserting *v.* 13. Space forbids me to continue this subject here. There is certainly a strong Christian element in this psalm (*vv.* 2-12), as there is in its companion—Ps. 1.

¹ Renouf, *Transactions of the Soc. of Bibl. Archæology*, vi. 494-508; cf. Maspero, *Academy*, xv. 456, and Renouf's letter, *ibid.* p. 480.

² Bishop Alexander, *St. Augustine's Holiday, and other Poems*, p. 233.

There are important phraseological parallelisms with other psalms. Comp. *v.* 3 with *lxix.* 3, 15, 16; *v.* 4 with *xxxiii.* 3 (see note); *v.* 6 with *cxix.* 17, 18; *v.* 7 with *l.* 8-13, *li.* 18; *v.* 10 with *xxii.* 23, 26; *v.* 13 *c* with *lxix.* 5 *a*; *v.* 15 with *xxxv.* 4, 26; *v.* 16 with *xxxv.* 21; *vv.* 15-18 with *lxix.* 23-29. The speaker in both parts of the psalm is either pious Israel personified, or (virtually the same thing) a representative pious Israelite (see on *v.* 7). Observe that there is still great danger from idolatry (*v.* 5).

- 2 I had waited, waited for Jehovah,
and he inclined (his ear) unto me, and heard my cry.
- 3 He brought me up also out of the pit of destruction,
out of the miry swamp,
and set my feet on a rock,
made firm my stepping ;
- 4 And he put a new song in my mouth,
even praise unto our God ;
that many should see it, and fear,
and put their trust in Jehovah.
- 5 Happy the man that hath made Jehovah his trust,
and hath not turned to the proud
and them that have lyingly fallen away.
- 6 In full measure hast thou accomplished, O Jehovah my God
thy marvels and thy designs concerning us ;
there is nothing comparable unto thee :
were I to declare and discourse of them,
they would be too vast for numbering.
- 7 In sacrifice and offering thou hadst no delight,
(but) open ears didst thou make me ;
burnt-offering and sin-offering thou didst not require ;
- 8 Then said I, 'Lo, I am come ;
in the roll of the book is my duty written ;
- 9 To do thy will, O my God, is my delight,
and thy law is within my heart.'
- 10 I told the glad news of (thy) righteousness in the great congrega-
tion ;
behold, I did not restrain my lips,
thou, Jehovah, knowest it.
- 11 Thy righteousness I hid not within my heart ;
thy faithfulness I declared, and thy salvation ;
I concealed not thy lovingkindness
nor thy truth from the great congregation.
- 12 Thou, too, Jehovah, canst not restrain thy compassions from me ;
thy lovingkindness and thy truth—
let them guard me continually.

(Fragment of another Psalm.)

- 13 For evils past numbering have encompassed me,
mine iniquities have overtaken me, so that I cannot see ;
they are more than the hairs of my head,
and my heart hath forsaken me.
- 14 Be pleased, Jehovah, to deliver me :
Jehovah, speed to my help.
- 15 Let them be shamed and abashed together
that seek my soul to take it away ;
let them be turned back with dishonour
that delight in my misfortune.
- 16 Let them be palsied with shame
that say unto me, Aha, Aha.
- 17 Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee ;
let such as love thy salvation say continually,
Jehovah be magnified.
- 18 And I—the afflicted and needy—
Jehovah will care for me :
thou art my help and my deliverer ;
make no tarrying, O my God.

2 **I had waited . . .** Israel calls to mind his mercies in the past, and so strengthens his faith.

3 Hitzig compares Jer. xxxviii. 6, interpreting the psalmist realistically (so too lxix. 3, 15, 16).

4 **A new song.** See on xxxiii. 3.—**That many should see it,** &c. A characteristic idea of II. Isaiah—that the restoration of Israel will spread the knowledge of Jehovah to the most distant nations.

5 **Happy the man . . .** This and the next verse are not indeed the 'new song,' but at any rate an echo of it.—**Not turned to the proud,** &c. As in Ps. xvi., xxxi., cxix., there is a large party of paganising Jews, with whom the psalmist absolutely disavows complicity. Comp. Ps. cxix. 21, 'the proud [another word], the accursed, who wander from thy commandments.'

6 **Thy marvels,** &c. 'Marvels,' the favourite word of the psalmists for the exceptional mercies of God's leadership ; 'designs,' a less common but equally distinctive expres-

sion for the complicated plan of Israel's divine-human history (xxxiii. 11, xcii. 5 ; comp. Isa. lv. 8, 9). 'Concerning us.' The psalm, then, is a national psalm.—**There is nothing,** &c. An exclamation of joyful surprise ; comp. lxxi. 19.

7 Israel of old 'made a covenant with Jehovah with sacrifice' (l. 6) ; but it was not the 'sacrifice' which was important to Jehovah, but Israel's obedience. Thus viewed, our passage is precisely parallel to Jer. vii. 22, 23. The sacrificial system had been continually growing in elaborateness ; the *'āshām* or 'guilt-offering' is the only Levitical sacrifice which is wanting, and this being a national psalm, we cannot be surprised at the omission. Our psalmist, however, differs, it would seem, from the friends of the Levitical legislation in not referring the sacrificial system to the institution of Jehovah. All that God, when forming Israel into a nation, expressly required was obedience (see on l. 7-15, li. 18, and comp. 1 Sam. xv. 22, 23, Hos. vi. 6) ; and this was all that God still required of

each individual Israelite (comp. Mic. vi. 8).—**Sacrifice**, including especially the *shélem* or thank-offering; **offering**, i.e. the so-called meal-offering (R. V.) and the accompanying libation; **sin-offering**, Heb. *kh'tāah* (not *khattāth*, the word used in Leviticus and elsewhere).—**Open ears**, &c. Lit., 'ears didst thou dig for me,' i.e. 'thou gavest me the faculty of hearing and obeying thy will.' Comp. Assurbanipal's language, 'The great gods . . . [to me] attentive ears have given' (*Records of the Past*, ix. 39).

8 **Then**, i.e. as soon as my ears were opened.—**I am come**, i.e. in obedience to thy call. To have come is equivalent to having entered on a course of obedience.—**In the roll of the book is my duty written** (lit., it is prescribed unto me). At first sight it may seem more plausible to render 'with the roll of the book' (cf. lxvi. 13), and explain, 'I am come before thee, not with sacrifices, but with the book in which I am exonerated from sacrifice, or in which at any rate the relative value of sacrifice and obedience is clearly set forth.' But then how are we to continue the line? We cannot say, 'with the roll of the book which is prescribed unto me.' We must therefore take the line as explaining the nature of the obedience which the speaker has undertaken to render. 'What "the roll of the book" prescribes as my duty, that will I perform.' But what is this 'roll'? Just afterwards we find the *tōra* of Jehovah spoken of. This suggests that the laws and exhortations embodied in Deuteronomy (so often called *tōra*) may be meant; Moses

actually says, 'These words which I command thee this day, shall be in thy heart.' (Delitzsch, who regards David as the speaker, and makes Deuteronomy pre-Davidic, finds an allusion to the king's duty as prescribed in Deut. xvii. 14-20.) Certainly the closing words seem like an echo of those given to Moses. But may we not take *tōra* in a wider sense, to include the prophets as well as the law (see on i. 2)? This will help us to understand the outspoken preference of what St. Paul would call personal sacrifice to ritual. To the psalmist, there was a Bible within the Bible, and the books of Deuteronomy and Jeremiah formed principal elements in its composition. 'Thy law within my heart' reminds us at once of Deut. vi. 6 and Jer. xv. 16, xxxi. 33.

10 **I told the glad news of (thy) righteousness**. 'Righteousness' is the later 'Isaiah's' favourite word for 'salvation' under one of its aspects (comp. *v.* 11 *b*); hence Hitzig renders here, 'Ich verkündete Heil.' The verb is well rendered *εὐγγελισάμην* (Sept.) The psalmist is such a 'herald of glad news' as is spoken of in Isa. xli. 27, li. 7.

12 **Thou too . . . restrain not**, &c. Corresponding to 'I have not restrained' (*v.* 10). The same idea as in Isa. lxiii. 15.—**Thy lovingkindness and thy truth**, &c. Comp. xlii. 9, lxi. 8.

13 **Mine iniquities**, or, the punishment of mine iniquities (see on xxxi. 11).

18 **Will care for me**, or, has designs (comp. *v.* 6) which even I can help to further. See *crit. note*.

PSALM XLI.

THE people of Israel is likened to a man who is dangerously sick, and whose sore disease is taken by malicious neighbours as a proof that he is forsaken by God. The sufferer makes his plaint to God, before whom he may no doubt be guilty (see introd. to Ps. xxxii.), but who will assuredly recognise before the world that he is innocent so far as man is concerned: like Job the speaker will by no means 'give up his integrity' (Job xxvii. 5).

That this psalm (with which compare vi. and xxxviii.) has a contemporary historical basis, can hardly be doubted. *Vv.* 2-4, which suggest an edifying lesson to the individual as such, are not really fatal to this conclusion.

- 2 Happy he that considers the helpless and poor !
in the day of misfortune Jehovah will rescue him.
- 3 Jehovah will preserve him and keep him alive,
and he shall be called happy in the land ;
and do not thou deliver him unto the greed of his enemies.
- 4 Jehovah will support him upon the bed of languishing :
as oft as he lies low, thou recoverest him in his sickness.
- 5 As for me, I say, ' Jehovah, have pity on me :
heal my soul, for I have sinned against thee.'
- 6 But mine enemies wish me evil,
' When will he die, and his name perish ?'
- 7 And if one come to see me, he speaks falsehood,
his heart gathers malice to itself ;
he goes abroad and speaks.
- 8 All that hate me whisper together against me,
against me do they imagine evil,
- 9 ' That which will be his perdition is fixed upon him,
and now that he lies, he will rise up no more :'
- 10 Even the man of my peace, in whom I trusted,
he who did eat of my bread, has become insolent towards me.
- 11 But thou, Jehovah, have pity on me,
and raise me up, that I may requite them.
- 12 By this I am sure thou hast pleasure in me,
that mine enemy shouts not in triumph over me.
- 13 And as for me, thou upholdest me in my blamelessness,
and settest me before thy face for ever.

Subscription to Book I.

- 14 Blessed be Jehovah, the God of Israel,
from æon to æon !
Amen and Amen.

2 **Considers.** The word in A.V. is happily chosen so as to include not merely the relief of material wants, but ' the fairness of those who judge prudently and with moderation of the afflicted.' Calvin even limits the reference to this. An instance of such friendly considerateness occurs in a parallel psalm (xxxv. 13, 14).

3 **In the land,** i.e. in the land of Canaan (as xxxvii. 3). Comp. xxxvi. 12 *b.*—**Do not thou.** Or, ' thou canst not' (comp. xxxiv. 6). The construction is changed, to express a more intense degree of feeling. The Sept., Symm., and Pesh. read ' let him not.'

4 **As oft as,** &c. Lit., ' all his lying down thou turnest (i.e. chang-

est into health) in his sickness.' The tense is the perfect of experience.

5 **Heal my soul.** For soul and body alike suffer from the sense of God's anger (vi. 3, 4, xxxi. 10).

7 **Falsehood,** i.e. hypocritical sympathy. — **Gathers malice,** viz. by observing the symptoms which justify the malicious conjecture that the case is desperate.

8 **Whisper together . . . imagine evil.** Either the poet falls out of the metaphor of a divinely sent sickness, and represents the enemy as plotting Israel's final ruin, or we must suppose that the whispered imagination consists in the malicious hope which they form, and would willingly, if they could, convert straightway into fact.

9 **That which will be his perdition.** Lit., 'a matter of perdition,' i.e. something which must sink him in perdition or the world of the dead (see on xviii. 5). The alternative rendering, 'a base deed' (comp. ci. 3), does not suit the context. — **Is fixed upon him.** Lit., 'is molten upon him,' like one of Dante's 'mantles of lead.' Comp. Job xli. 15, Heb. — **He will rise up no more.** Sept. suggestively (reading *lū*), 'if he were to go on to recover;' see Driver, *H. Tenses*, § 142, n. 1.

10 The cruellest pang of all came from a treacherous friend, called **the man of my peace**, i.e. not merely 'mine own familiar friend' (A.V.), but one who was specially attached to me by a cove-

nant, and one **who did eat of my bread**, i.e. who was my frequent guest at table. The parallelism with lv. 13-15 cannot escape notice. In both passages the question arises whether we have an episode of personal history (comp. Jer. xx. 10), or whether 'the man' is a personification of treacherous neighbours of the Jews. For the latter view, comp. the similar phraseology of Obad. 7, 'The men that were at peace with thee [viz. with Edom] have deceived thee and prevailed against thee; [they that ate] thy bread have laid a snare under thee.' If the speaker in *vv.* 5-13 is either Israel or a typical pious Israelite (see introd.), we obviously must accept this view for *v.* 10, and may then compare xxxviii. 12, but are not perhaps tied to its acceptance for lv. 13-15 (see notes).

13 **Settest me before thy face.** See on xi. 7, xvi. 11, xvii. 15.

14 (Subscription.) A doxology such as was probably uttered in the name of the people at the close of every psalm used in the liturgy (comp. Neh. ix. 5). 'From æon to æon' (Tennyson and Browning having enriched our language by the word)¹ means 'both in this æon and in the next.' The doxology thus becomes a creed; no one who disbelieved in a future life could repeat it (Talm. Jerus., *Berakhoth* ix. 5, 9). — **Amen and Amen.** 'So is it' (rather than 'So be it'). Comp. the fuller form of the doxology in cvi. 48.

¹ Cf. also Goethe's *Faust*.

'Es kann die Spur von meinen Erdentagen
Nicht in Aeonen untergehen.'

BOOK II.

PSALMS XLII. AND XLIII.

THE sigh of an exile. These two psalms really form but one, as appears from the identity of subject and of refrain, and from the interlacing repetitions. They can only have been separated at a comparatively recent date, as the so-called Ps. xliii. is the only psalm in this Korahite group (xlii.—xlix.) unprovided in the Hebrew with a superscription. The author writes at a distance from the sanctuary, and is a prey to the taunts of an impious people. In the first strophe, he longs for his God; in the second, he utters his plaint, and describes his need; in the third, he passes into definite supplication, and anticipates the joy and gratitude of deliverance. It is a perfect lyric poem. Compare Ps. lxxxiv., also a Korahite psalm.

The preference for 'Elohim' (instead of 'Jehovah') which distinguishes Book II. is visible in this psalm. It was characteristic, not merely of the editor, but of the original author. Here and there, however, there is reason to believe that the writer allowed himself to use 'Jehovah,' which the editor changed into 'Elohim,' except in *v.* 9.

- 2 As a hind which pants after running streams,
so pants my soul after thee, O God.
- 3 My soul thirsts for Elohim, for the living God;
when shall I come in and appear before God?
- 4 My tears have been food to me day and night,
whilst all day long they say unto me, Where is thy God?
- 5 This must I remember, pouring out my soul upon me,
how I went along with the throng, conducting them to the
house of God,
with ringing cries and giving of thanks—a festive multitude.
- 6 Why art thou bowed down, O my soul, and why moaning upon
me?
wait thou for Jehovah, for unto him I shall yet give thanks
as the saviour of my countenance and my God.
- 7 My soul upon me is bowed down; therefore will I think upon
thee
from the land of Jordan and of Hermonim, from the little
mountain.
- 8 Flood calls unto flood at the sound of thy cataracts,
all thy breakers and billows have gone over me:

- 9 (Yet) will Jehovah by day give charge to his lovingkindness,
and in the night will his song be with me,
even a prayer unto the God of my life.
- 10 Let me say unto God my rock, 'Why hast thou forgotten me?
why go I as a mourner amidst the oppression of the enemy?'
- 11 Like rottenness in my bones, my foes reproach me,
whilst all day long they say unto me, Where is thy God?
- 12 Why art thou bowed down, my soul, and why moaning upon me?
wait thou for Jehovah, for unto him I shall yet give thanks
as the saviour of my countenance and my God.
- 1 Right me, Elohim, and plead my cause against a loveless nation;
from the deceitful and unjust man mayest thou deliver me.
- 2 For thou art God my stronghold: why hast thou cast me off?
why go I as a mourner amidst the oppression of the enemy?
- 3 Send forth thy light and thy truthfulness; let them lead me,
let them bring me unto thy holy hill and to thy habitation.
- 4 Then will I go in unto the altar of Elohim,
even unto God my exceeding joy:
and give thanks to thee upon the lyre, O Jehovah my God.
- 5 Why art thou bowed down, O my soul, and why moaning upon
me?
wait for Jehovah, for unto him I shall yet give thanks
as the saviour of my countenance and my God.

2 **As a hind.** Under any circumstances, the comparison of the 'soul' of the believer (observe that *nefesh* is feminine) to a hind would be appropriate, this sensitive creature being a type of affectionateness (Rev. v. 19; cf. Jer. xiv. 5). But the psalmist, who is debarred from the services of the temple, has now in his mind's eye a deer who has been long unable, from fear of the huntsman, to descend from its rocks to slake its thirst. He may even be writing within sight of panting hinds gathered by the fresh mountain streams which flow into the Jordan. But there is no absolute necessity for this hypothesis; the image is natural enough to a Hebrew poet. So Jeremiah calls his God the 'fountain of living waters,' Jer. ii. 13, xvii. 13.—**Running streams.** Comp. Job vi. 15-17.—**My soul,** i.e. that part of human nature which to the Hebrew writers

appeared the most characteristic of personality—the emotional and volitional, the centre of which is the heart. Naturally enough, it was of the feminine gender (hence compared to the 'hind'). It 'is apt to sink and droop under affliction; and to lie as a burden upon the spirit of the believer' (Kay). See v. 6, and comp. cxxi. 2. A merry heart is also said to lie (lightly) 'upon' a man (1 Sam. xxv. 36).

3 **For the living God.** The word for 'God' (*'ēl*) is chosen for its shortness (comp. on xxii. 2); it lent itself better than *'elohim* to the formation of quasi-compounds (comp. v. 9). 'The living God' (so lxxiv. 3), in contrast to the 'dead' gods of the heathen (cvi. 28). Comp. 'fountain of life,' xxxvi. 10.—**Come in,** viz. into the temple, as xliii. 4; comp. lxiii. 3.

4 A fresh pang arises from the blasphemy of the heathen, who

assure him that he has lost his God.—**My tears, &c.** Comp. lxxx. 6, and see on cii. 10.—**Where is thy God?** Heathen conquerors arguing from Israel's calamities to the impotence (= non-existence) of Israel's God, lxxix. 10, cxv. 2 (see note), Joel ii. 17.

5 **Let me bethink me, &c.** Let me indulge the sad pleasure of retrospect. 'Pouring out my soul' is parallel to the phrase 'pour out your heart' (lxii. 19). The soul is elsewhere identified as it were with the blood; but here this elegiac poet represents it as passing away in a flood of tears (comp. Lam. ii. 18, 19). So Job xxx. 16.—**How I went, &c.** The tense is a frequentative. The 'throng' consisted of the pilgrims who went up (cf. Isa. xxx. 29) at the great festivals.—**Led them in procession,** as a Korahite skilled in song (2 Chron. xx. 19). The word is expressive and pictorial; see on Isa. xxxviii. 15 (where R.V. marg. is alone correct).

6 The retrospect has been one of mingled sorrow and joy. The singer has not admitted the blasphemy that he has lost his God. He expostulates with his too feminine 'soul,' and calls upon 'her' to hope still in God.—**Moanest upon me** (see on v. 2). Similarly Keble. Comp. 'my heart moaneth unto me,' Jer. iv. 19.—**As the saviour, &c.** We should have expected 'the lifter up of my countenance,' i.e. 'him who causes me to see prosperity' (iv. 7); so Keble, 'th' Enlightener of mine eye.' But the face (as the noblest visible part of the body (comp. Isa. iii. 15) represents here the person (i.e. body and soul together, but with more emphasis on the body); rhythm was better served by *yeshûath pânai* than by the shorter *yeshûâthî* (just as Dante had to put *le nostre persone* for *noi*, *Purg.* xii. 108). The received text has 'thank him (for) the salvation (or, saving health) of his countenance; the Hebrew construction in this case becomes extremely harsh.

7 With a pleasing variation the poet repeats his sad complaint, but at once betakes himself to a sure source of encouragement. In interpreting this passage, I follow the imitative writer of Jonah's psalm (see Jon. ii. 7). Even in the beginning of his elegy, the retrospect of the past was not altogether depressing. In another equally plaintive psalm, too, though at first the poet 'can but moan' when he 'thinks upon God'—that God who seems to have 'cast off for ever'—yet soon afterwards a wider retrospect restores elasticity to his spirit (lxxvii. 4, 6-13). So here. Prayer has no obstacle but sin (Isa. lviii. 4); it can cross streams and pierce through mountain-walls. In the first strophe the poet was not as yet fully conscious of the benefits of memory; but now he deliberately has recourse to it as a source of encouragement; he has reached a higher spiritual level. This interpretation, however, stands or falls with that of v. 9. If that verse (see note) relates to the past, it will seriously affect our rendering of v. 7. It is a fair inference from v. 6 that the poet as it were doubles his consciousness (comp. Isa. xxi. 6, 7), and regards his mental state as an outsider.

Why sittest thou on that sea-girt rock,
With downward look and sadly dreaming
eye?

he seems to say, like 'New Self' in the *Lyra Apostolica* (No. lxxix.), and it may be that v. 7 contains the result of his enquiry, viz. that 'Old Self' is sadly thinking of that God from whom locally he seems to be parted. The Hebrew has, 'therefore do I think upon thee;' but this means 'therefore it is clear that I am, or have been, thinking upon thee' (a thought which is a depressing one to a like-minded psalmist; see lxxvii. 4). Comp. xlv. 3, 'therefore (= this can only be because) God hath blessed thee for ever;' and Isa. xxvi. 14, 'The dead live not . . . therefore thou hast visited and destroyed them,'

i.e. 'The "other lords" have passed into Sheól; it is clear, then, that a divine punishment has overtaken them.' If we adopt this view, we shall, in deference to Western idiom, substitute 'because' for 'therefore' (Hitzig, 'dieweil'). [Prof. Briggs would omit the opening words, 'My soul,' &c.; the distich thus becomes more symmetrical. Prof. Bickell obtains the same result by omitting 'upon me' and 'from the little hill' as interpolations.]—**From the land of Jordan,** &c. He will not minimise his privations; he counts the cost of his venture of faith. He is not indeed 'at the end of the earth,' and could easily be brought back to his heart's true home (see on xliii. 3). But this only aggravates his vexation. 'By the rivers of Babylon' he would find it easier to be patient than in the neighbourhood of his own majestic mountains and swiftly flowing stream. We might also render 'since (I left) the land of Jordan and Hermonim;' or 'far from the land,' &c. In this case the writer may be supposed to be in a more distant place of exile (so Olshausen and Smend). But this is not the most obvious meaning of the Hebrew, and in a lyric composition we should prefer the easiest interpretation. The preposition 'from' is chosen (rather than 'in') with a subtle purpose. It suggests that the psalmist's faith will bridge over the interval between himself and the sanctuary: 'I can send my thoughts to thee from the distant frontier, even as thou canst send thy light and thy truth to me.' The phrase, **the land of Jordan,** &c., seems most naturally explained of the north-eastern corner of Palestine near the lower slopes of Hermon, or, as it is here called, with an allusion to its three summits, **Hermonim.** There the writer is against his will detained, far from Jehovah's temple and sur-

rounded (it can scarcely be an anachronism to suppose) by the signs of fervent heathenism. 'There must be something,' observes Thomson, 'about this Upper Jordan and its surroundings particularly calculated to call out and foster the religious or the superstitious propensities of our nature.' The temples which crowd the region of Anti-Libanus with Hermon may be far more recent than our psalm, but they doubtless stand on holy sites of immemorial antiquity. But what is the meaning of the additional words, **from the little mountain?** According to an old view, the expression is a disparaging one; as Musculus puts it, 'Vocat ea montana montem modicum respectu regni ac populi Dei' (comp. lxviii. 16, 17). But I do not believe any poet would have hinted disparagement in this way at the end of a verse. One of the more recent theories¹ discovers in the words a covert reference to the physical insignificance of *Mount Zion*: Olshausen, to make the reference more distinct, proposes to read conjecturally 'mountain of (the solemn) assembly' (comp. Isa. xiv. 13). In this case the entire land of Canaan is described by enumerating three of its most remarkable localities, the river Jordan, the Hermon range, and the temple mount. If either Tabor (lxxxix. 13) or Lebanon (Zech. x. 10) had been included, this view would be plausible; but as the passage stands, I can only regard it as a description of the extreme north of the trans-Jordanic region, admirably reproduced in Herder's version:—

Und dennoch grämt sich meine Seele
noch!
So will ich denn auch hier an dich
gedenken,
Hier zwischen Berg und Strom,
Am Jordan und den Hügeln Libanus.²

The German poet, however, not only changes Hermon into Lebanon,

¹ See Smend, *Theol. Stud. u. Krit.*, 1884, p. 733; Halévy, *Mélanges de critique*, p. 19.

² *Geist der ebräischen Poesie*, sect. x.

but omits the 'little mountain.' The views already mentioned are no doubt inadequate to account for this phrase; can any other be suggested? Can it mean one of the lower hills of the Hermon range, such, for instance, as the hill above Paneas, from which one of the finest prospects in Syria can be enjoyed,¹ and near which the Jordan bursts forth from its two sources at Paneas and Tell el-Kādi? Or some hill farther south, which would equally command a view of the snow-fields of Hermon? Some may think this more probable than I do. To me this appendage to 'Hermonim' seems a poetic loss. Unless the 'little mountain' has a symbolic meaning, I wish it away. Can it have this symbolic meaning? Böttcher, Riehm, and Grill think so,² 'Hermonim' being, according to them, a poetic name for the 'mountains whence cometh my help' (cxi. 1), or, as it might be expressed, Hermon being the advanced guard of the 'mountains of Zion' (comp. cxxxiii. 3), and 'the little mountain' a symbol of the humiliation of the psalmist (the antithesis of the phrase in xxx. 8). In this case we should render, 'and (I think of) Hermonim from the little mountain.' But how can 'Jordan' be taken literally, and the following topographical features symbolically? On the whole, I cannot help suspecting a corruption, which, however, I have not the means of healing.

8 **Flood calls unto flood, &c.**

A striking figurative description of a succession of calamities. 'Misfortunes never come singly.' Each billow as it roars seems to call its fellow, and all alike to have come from no earthly fountain-head, but from 'the cataracts of heav'n set open' (*Paradise Lost*, xi. 824-5). The climax is added by the statement that all these heaven-sent

'breakers and billows' have gone over the sufferer (a detail copied in *Jon.* ii. 4). These images might no doubt have occurred to any Hebrew poet (comp. xxxii. 6, lxix. 2, 3, lxxxviii. 8). They might be suggested by the sea, but also by the chief river of Israel—the Jordan. Hengstenberg is perverse in denying this; the mention of Jordan in *v.* 7 renders the conjecture a natural one. The deafening murmur with which this river dashes over the rocks in its meandering course amply justifies the descriptive title *tehôm* (see on lxxi. 20), and the expression 'breakers and billows' is surely applicable, not only to the sea, but to any stream which struck the poets as in any respect resembling the sea.

9 This verse is the happy result of calling Jehovah to mind; the thought of that God who has before now revealed Himself in love has lifted the singer out of his despondency. *V.* 9, then, corresponds to the second clause of *v.* 7, as *v.* 8 to the first. ('Yet' is justified by 'therefore,' &c.)—**Unto his lovingkindness**, personified as an angel (comp. xci. 11, and *Parad. Lost*, iii. 329).—**By day give charge**, &c. 'Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning' (xxx. 6). A day of lovingkindness (shown in God's outward favours) will dawn again, and the night which follows on such a day will be vocal with praise. We thus obtain a parallel to the fine epithet of God in *Job* xxxv. 10, 'who giveth songs in the night.' The prayer spoken of in the last line will be that of praiseful recognition of God's lovingkindnesses, which are 'new every morning' (*Lam.* iii. 22). It is tempting, no doubt, to emend *tefillah* ('prayer') into *tehillah* ('song'); comp. on lxxii. 20. Tempting; but unnecessary. Here, as in *Hab.* iii. 1,

¹ Socin, *Palästina und Syrien* (Baedeker), p. 401; comp. Stanley, *Sinai and Palestine*, p. 398 (on Paneas).

² See Riehm in Hupfeld's *Psalmen*, ii. 392; Grill, *Der achtundsechzigste Psalm*, p. 115.

prayer is the name of a class of mediative agencies pertaining to the individual, of which praise is one subdivision, and supplication another (comp. on lxx. 2, 3). This is in perfect accordance both with Biblical usage and with the primary idea of the Heb. *tefillah*. The songs of Hannah and of Jonah are introduced by, 'And Hannah prayed,' 'And Jonah prayed' (1 Sam. ii. 1, Jon. ii. 1). And why not? The essential idea of *tefillah* is mediation or interpretation; ¹ prayer is in fact a provision of human nature for mediating between the individual and his God, and interpreting his religious feelings and longings. The objection to this view of the meaning of the verse is that the next verse *seems* like a specimen of the prayer referred to at the end of v. 9. But we may be deceived by appearances; prayer means, as we have seen, not necessarily supplication, but sometimes praise. We may, however, if we reject this sense of prayer, at least for this passage, render the second and third lines 'and in the night his song is with me, even a prayer unto the God of my life;' i.e. even now, in this night of affliction (comp. Isa. xxvi. 9). I can solace myself by singing my prayers or supplications (such as that which follows in v. 10) to my own personal God. This is less natural: 'by day' and 'by night' seem correlative, and together to mean 'continually' (cf. xcii. 3). We hardly ought to refer lines 1 and 2 to different points of time. A third view, not without some plausibility, is to refer the whole verse to time present; this makes it a good match for v. 8, which describes the psalmist's present circumstances. We shall in this case render, 'By day doth Jehovah give charge, &c., i.e. God still sends messages of love, though they have not yet been felt in the return of outward prosperity, and I therefore still

send up songs of praiseful and expectant faith. Another lyric poet, in still more depressing times, exclaims, 'The lovingkindness of Jehovah, surely they are not consumed'² (Lam. iii. 22). May not our psalmist, then, express the same confidence in his own more vivid style? He might; but not in the middle of his spiritual crisis. He still feels, in spite of his better self, as if God had forgotten him, and looks forward to praising God in the future (see the refrain vv. 6, 12, xliii. 6). According to a fourth view, the tenses in the translation should be in the past,—'By day did Jehovah give charge, &c. (viz. in the former happy times), and in the night was his song with me! This is possible; we thus obtain a parallel to the imperfects in v. 5. But the transition thus produced from v. 8 to v. 9 and from v. 9 to v. 10 is singularly abrupt.—**His song**, i.e. a song of which He is the subject.—**The God of my life**. A beautiful variation upon 'the living God' (v. 4). Comp. Sirach xxiii. 4, 'Father and God of my life.'

10 **Let me say**. This is not one of those prayers which are also 'songs' (v. 9); but an expostulation broken by sobs, like xxii. 2.

11 **As though they broke**, &c. The expression is peculiar. Either the hurling of hostile reproaches is compared to the slashing of a warrior with his sword (comp. Heb. iv. 12), or the mental pain which they cause to the piercing sensation (Job xxx. 17) of a physical pain in the bones. (The two senses of *raçakkh* are 'dashing in pieces,' see lxii. 4; and 'killing,' Deut. xxii. 26 and elsewhere.) The latter view is recommended by the preposition 'in;' but may not this 'in' be due to an accidental repetition on the part of the scribe (*b'raçakkh baçmôthai* stands in the text)? The Sept., against Aquila and Symmachus, has no preposition.

¹ See Delitzsch on Isa. i. 15.

² Following the Sept., Targum, and Peshitto.

12 **For Jehovah.** So v. 6. The text has 'for Elohim;' can this be right—'for Elohim . . . as my Elohim'? Cf. xliii. 4, 5, and on lxxxii. 1.

XLIII.—1 **A loveless nation.** Or, 'an impious nation,' but less suitably to the parallelism. Probably the heathen oppressors of Israel are meant, whose ideal did not include humanity or the love of man as man. True, Israel's ideal had not always included this. Benevolence and mercifulness were features of the later Jewish character. See *Pirke Abhoth* v. 19, 'A good eye, &c., belong to the disciples of Abraham our father;' *Beṣa* (Talm. Bab.), 32 *b*, 'Everyone who is merciful towards his fellow-creatures is certainly of the seed of Abraham our father, and everyone who is not so is certainly not of his seed.' In short, *φιλανθρωπία* had widened into *φιλανθρωπία*. Comp. note on xii. 1.

3 **Send forth, &c.** God's light and truthfulness are personified; comp. 'Frau Treue' and 'Frau Wahrheit' in old German poetry. One would take them for angels (see on xlii. 9). In fact, the angels are in course of becoming pure symbols. God is now more precious than any mere messenger of his. He is a God, however, who does not sit aloof, but is ever radiating 'light;' that is, loving-kindness (see on lvii. 4) and 'truth;' that is, all those blessings which He has promised, especially return from exile and the enjoyment of the temple services.

4 **Upon the lyre.** For in this land of exile we have hung up our lyres on the willows (cxxxvii. 1, 2). Theodoret's comment, who supposes the psalmist to assume *prophetically* the standpoint of the Babylonian exile.

PSALM XLIV.

THE prayer of the martyr-nation—oppressed, scattered, and insulted Israel, which feels itself, like Job its type, to be suffering innocently. A Maccabean date has most recent authority in its favour (cf. Ps. lx., also in Book III., lxxiv., lxxix., lxxx., and others); but at this point I can only glance here.

- 2 We have heard with our ears, Elohim,
our fathers have rehearsed unto us,
the work thou didst in their days, in the days of old.
- 3 With thy hand thou didst root up nations and plant *them* in,
didst hew down peoples, and spread *them* abroad.
- 4 For they conquered not the land by their own sword,
neither did their own arm save them:
but thy right hand, and thine arm, and the light of thy
countenance,
because thou hadst pleasure in them.
- 5 Thou thyself art my King, O God;
command salvation for Jacob.
- 6 Through thee can we push down our foes,
in thy name can we tread down our assailants.
- 7 For not in my bow do I trust,
neither can my sword save me

- 8 But *thou* hast saved us from our foes,
and hast put them to shame that hated us.
- 9 We make our boast of Elohim all day long,
and give thanks unto thy name for ever.
- 10 Yet thou hast cast off and hast disgraced us,
and goest not forth with our hosts.
- 11 Thou causest us to turn back from the foe,
and they that hate us plunder at their will.
- 12 Thou makest us like sheep for eating,
and hast scattered us among the nations.
- 13 Thou sellest thy people cheaply,
and hast not set their prices high.
- 14 Thou makest us a reproach to our neighbours,
a mocking and a derision to those around us.
- 15 Thou makest us a byword among the nations,
a shaking of the head among the peoples.
- 16 All the day long is my disgrace before me,
and the shame of my face hath covered me.
- 17 At the voice of him that reproaches and reviles,
at the mien of the enemy and the revengeful.
- 18 All this is come upon us ; yet have we not forgotten thee,
nor become disloyal to thy covenant ;
- 19 Our heart hath not turned back,
neither have our steps swerved from thy way,
- 20 That thou shouldest (therefore) have crushed us down into the
place of jackals,
and covered us with Hades gloom.
- 21 If we had forgotten the name of our God,
or stretched out our hands to any strange god,
- 22 Would not Elohim search this out ?
for he knows the secrets of the heart.
- 23 But nay ; for thy sake are we killed all the day long,
we are accounted as sheep for slaughter.
- 24 Rouse thee, why sleepest thou, Jehovah ?
awake, cast not off for ever.
- 25 Wherefore hidest thou thy face,
forgetting our affliction and oppression ?
- 26 For our soul is bowed down to the dust,
our body cleaves to the earth.
- 27 Arise to be our help,
and set us free for thy lovingkindness' sake.

3 **Spread them abroad.** First, Israel is 'planted in;' next, its *branches* are 'spread abroad.' So lxxx. 9, 12.

5 Sept. has, *Σὺ εἶ αὐτὸς ὁ βασιλεὺς μου καὶ ὁ Θεὸς μου, ὁ ἐντελλόμενος τὰς σωτηρίας Ἰακώβ.* Certainly a petition for deliverance seems to come too early; but the order of thought in lyric poems is not always the logically natural one. Bickell, however, follows Sept.—**My King.** The nation is involuntarily personified, as so often (cf. *v.* 7).—**Command**, or, 'give a charge to.' 'Salvation' or 'full salvation' (plur., a divine interposition being referred to, as xviii. 51 and lxxiv. 12, Isa. xxxiii. 6, but not Isa. xxvi. 18) is personified (cf. lxxviii. 29).

6 **Push down**, a metaphor from bulls (see Deut. xxxiii. 17, 1 Kings xxii. 11, Dan. xi. 40, and cf. Virg. *Æn.* xii. 720, &c.)

7 **Save me**, i.e. give me the victory (xx. 6, 10).

9 **We make our boast**, &c. So another plaintive psalm speaks of Jehovah as 'enthroned on the praises of Israel' (xxii. 4).

10 **Goest not forth**, &c. So lx. 12; cf. lxxviii. 8, Judg. iv. 14.

13 **Thou sellest**, &c. 'Thou dissolvest thy relation to thy people' (Deut. xxxii. 30, Isa. lii. 3). There is probably no allusion here to the slavery into which many Jewish captives were sold (cf. Joel iii. 6).

17 **At the mien**, &c. This

rendering is required to obtain a parallel to 'at the voice.'

18-23. This consciousness of (legal) righteousness seems to most to indicate the Maccabean period. The expressions remind us of lxix. 8 (see, however, on lxix. 6, 7).

20 (**Therefore**); i.e. as a punishment for infidelity. We must supply this word.—**Into the place of jackals.** This is scarcely a topographical reference, as Hitzig takes it, reminding us that jackals are still common in the region mentioned in 1 Macc. v. 56-61.¹ The psalmist nowhere gets beyond a general description of the misery of himself and his people. He knew the prophets, and may have remembered the close of Jer. x. 22.

24 **Why sleepest thou?** Faith cannot dispense with symbols, and weak faith naturally falls into the worn-out symbols of a lower stage of religion (cf. 1 Kings xviii. 27). A 'full assurance of faith' would have rejected the idea of Jehovah's sleeping (cxxi. 4, note). The Phœnicians represented El (Ἴλος) with eyes before and behind, ἐπειδὴ κοιμώμενος ἔβλεπε, καὶ ἐργηγορῶς ἐκοιμᾶτο (Philo Bybl., *ap.* Euseb. *Præp. Ev.* i. 10). Similarly two late Biblical writers (Zech. iv. 10, 2 Chron. xvi. 9). But the Psalter was meant to be the record of all moods (cf. vii. 7, xxxv. 23, lix. 5, 6, lxxviii. 65).

PSALM XLV.

GOD'S best gift to a fortunate king. A poem of lofty and yet elegant art, but wanting (the remark is Ewald's) in the fire and energy which mark the Davidic and Solomonic age. It may be called a mixture of the encomion proper and the epithalamion. But to what king is it addressed? One translator, who, being no mean poet, has a special right to speak (Julius Hammer), evades this question as not affecting the enjoyment of the reader. But surely we cannot appreciate the poem without at least knowing how the historical allusions have been explained. The question is one with which exegesis is deeply concerned, and the data are entirely exegetical. Obviously the subject of the poem is the marriage of a great and warlike king to his principal wife, and if we explain 'daughter of

¹ Hitzig thinks that the psalm was occasioned by the defeat of Joseph and Azarias, described in this passage.

Tyre' (*v.* 13) as a vocative, it determines the queen to be a Tyrian princess. Let us first of all accept this view of *v.* 13 *a*. Among all the kings of Israel and Judah, the only one whom we know to have been married to a Phœnician princess is Ahab (1 Kings xvi. 31). This is pointed out by Hitzig. Like the hero of our psalm, Ahab was a lover of luxury, and built himself an ivory palace (1 Kings xxii. 39); he was also not unsuccessful in war (1 Kings xx.), and showed great courage in the battle in which he died (1 Kings xxii. 35). It is true that his weak, unsteady character led him into acts which the leading prophets could not condone (1 Kings xvi. 30, but comp. xxi. 27–29); but these acts were yet future, nor can we assume without proof that the psalmist would have expressed himself like the writer of 1 Kings xvi. 30. True, moreover, that *v.* 17 rather suggests a long line of royal ancestors; but a poet would readily declare and believe that the 'fathers' of the youthful Ahab were mighty and valiant men. Of course, no editor of temple-songs would have admitted such a poem into his collection, had he supposed that it referred to Ahab, or indeed to any king of (northern) Israel. But if he mistook the psalm for a hymn to some typically Messianic king of Judah, or why not say at once, to the Messiah of the future, he might well have admitted it, especially if he read *v.* 13 *a* in its present most probably corrupt form, misinterpreted by him. We know that the psalm was expounded of the Messiah by the Targum and many Jewish scholars (e.g. Kimchi).

Would it surprise us to find a king of Israel described as the favourite of Jehovah, and in language elsewhere applied to kings of the Davidic house (cf. Isa. xvi. 5, Ps. lxxxix. 28)? But ought it so to do? Did not a prophet expressly sanction the kingdom of Jeroboam (1 Kings xi. 29–39; cf. *Hosea* in the Cambridge Bible, p. 26)? And why should we be reluctant to admit that a pure marriage-song could have proceeded from the heretical north? Many regard the Song of Songs as describing the simple manners of the rural districts of the north, and we have no right to assume that moral decay was general as early as Ahab. The fact that such a prophet as *Hosea* was born in the north, proves the contrary. Nor may we ignorantly depreciate the youthful Ahab. This poem may have been an inspired appeal to him to walk worthily of his high calling. Still I confess that Jeroboam II. would please me better as a hero, partly because he was the greatest of the northern kings, and 'by his hand Jehovah saved Israel' (2 Kings xiv. 27), and partly because Ps. xlv. and the Song of Songs may then, as it seems, be used for the purpose of mutual illustration. So Ewald, who finds the same king referred to in Ps. xxi. But Ewald cannot tell me who was Jeroboam II.'s wife!

But now suppose that (with Ewald himself) we accept a different view of *v.* 13 *a*. Then it becomes possible to refer the psalm to some king of Judah. Delitzsch thinks of Joram, the son of Jehoshaphat; Grätz, paraphrasing 'thy people' in *v.* 11 *b* by 'thy family' (cf. 2 Kings iv. 13), of Hezekiah.¹ Delitzsch's view is certainly the more plausible. To whom would the warning in *v.* 11 *b* be more suitable than to Athaliah? And if Tyre is mentioned as sending presents to Jerusalem, the Tyrian descent of Athaliah may perhaps account for this. The word שגל too in *v.* 10 *a*, if specially north-Palestinian, would be very appropriate to the daughter of Ahab. I confess that this latter argument seems to me to overshoot the mark. There are other words besides, or meanings of words (מהיר, רחש, מנינים), which might plausibly be regarded as north-Palestinian (because possibly Aramaising), and which a bolder critic might even treat as indications of a post-Exile date (the king being some heathen king—some Ptolemy or

¹ But would the favour of a Jewess (Hezekiah's wife) have been courted by foreigners?

Persian king, for instance—who was friendly to the Jews). To me, the most conservative view which is probable is either Hitzig's or Ewald's. But the question must be treated again under a more comprehensive heading.

For my own part, I have no doubt that the psalm was preserved in the Psalter on the theory of its original Messianic reference—a theory which few will maintain now. Wetzstein's theory that the *songs* in the *Shir ha-Shirim* were admitted into the Canon as models of worthy marriage-songs may at least suggest a reason for the retention both of Canticles and of Ps. xlv. in our Bible. It is in fact most instructive to see how loftily even a Hebrew court-poet thinks of the institution of marriage. 'Und wer das Alte Testament von einem freiem Gesichtspunkt auffasst, sei er Theolog oder bloss Literator, um keinen Preis ein so seltenes Stück des hebräischen Alterthums missen wollen; denn unstreitig wirft das Niedere ein Licht zurück auf das Höhere.' These are the words of Ewald, full of youthful fire, in ed. 1 of his work on the Psalms. The traditional Christian application, whether of single verses or of the whole psalm, cannot here be examined (see Calvin and Delitzsch); I am here confined to the historical meaning. But how striking, in the light of the history of the retribution-doctrine, is Gregory VII.'s application of *v.* 8 to himself.

The sense does not seem to me to favour Bickell's division of the psalm into five strophes of eight lines each. How, for instance, can we break up *vv.* 4-8?

- 2 My heart bubbles with goodly words ;
I address my work unto the king :
be my tongue the pen of a ready scribe !
- 3 Beauteous art thou, beauteous, above the sons of men ;
grace is shed over thy lips :
therefore God has blessed thee for ever.
- 4 Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, thou hero,
even thy glory and thy grandeur.
- 5 * * ride on, press through,
in behalf of good faith, righteousness, and humbleness,
and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things.
- 6 Let thine arrows be sharp, [thou hero,]
in the heart of the king's enemies ;
let the peoples fall under thee.
- 7 As for thy throne, [firm is its foundation,]
God [has established it] for ever and ever :
a sceptre of equity is the sceptre of thy kingdom.
- 8 Thou lovest righteousness and hatest iniquity,
therefore Jehovah, thy God, has anointed thee
with the oil of joy above thy fellows.
- 9 Myrrh and aloes (and) cassia are all thy garments,
out of the ivory palace stringed instruments make thee glad.
- 10 Kings' daughters are among thy favourites :
upon thy right hand stands the consort in gold of Ophir.

- 11 Harken, O daughter, and behold, and incline thine ear ;
forget also thine own people, and thy father's house ;
- 12 And when the king longs after thy beauty
(for he is thy lord), bow down unto him.
- 13 [And unto thee] shall they [come], O daughter of Tyre, with gifts,
the richest of people shall sue for thy favour.
- 14 All glorious is the king's daughter ; of pearls
in ouches of gold is her clothing.
- 15 In brodered apparel is she led along unto the king :
a train of virgins her companions is brought unto thee ;
- 16 Led along with all joy and exultation,
they enter into the king's palace.
- 17 Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children,
whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth.
- 18 I will celebrate thy name throughout all generations,
therefore shall the peoples give thanks unto thee for ever and
ever.

2 The poet feels himself inspired, but as yet feeling is in excess of judgment. Words crowd in upon his mind, but require to be artfully arranged, for he bethinks himself that he is to celebrate a king.—

A ready scribe (cf. Ezra vii. 6, A.V.) De Witt (with Sept), 'a swift writer ;' i.e. the poet says he can improvise the beautiful lines which follow as fast as the nimblest pen can write. Hitzig thinks the allusion is to calligraphy. If so, the singer compares the choice form of his poem to the elegant characters of a master-scribe. But would not this better suit an Arabic writer ?

3 **Beauteous art thou . . .** Comeliness being one important attribute of a king (comp. Isa. xxxiii. 17, 'the king in his beauty') ; still more of a royal bridegroom.—

Above the sons of men. Comp. 1 Sam. ix. 2, x. 23.—**Grace is shed,** &c. 'Words of grace' (Luke iv. 22) proceed from lips about which a smile plays.—**Therefore,** expressing the poet's inference from the noble appearance of the king.—**For ever.** See introduction to Ps. xxi.

4-6 The mention of the king's

graciousness suggests that of his chivalrous prowess. He smiles on the righteous, but frowns on the oppressor. The poet imagines him taking the field, and calls upon him to exhibit himself in the truly royal light of a defender of the innocent. Comp. Milton's noble application of the passage, *Paradise Lost*, vi. 710-4.

4 **Thou hero.** As xxiv. 8. Or, 'thou valiant one' (as xix. 6).

—**Thy glory and thy grandeur.** These are divine attributes (see on xxi. 6), and communicate a divine force to the king's weapons. In short, *they* are his true panoply. Nothing is said of the king's men of war. He is filled with the spirit of Rameses, as described by another 'skilful scribe' (Pentaur) ; 'I am with thee, I, thy father Ra : my hand is with thee. I am worth to thee a hundred thousand joined in one' (*Records of the Past*, ii. 70).

5 The received text repeats 'And thy grandeur.' We could understand this, if the king's grandeur or splendour (taking this in a weakened sense of the king's splendid weapons) stood in any real relation to the following verbs—if, for

instance, we could render, with Ewald, 'and clad with thy grandeur' (an *anadiplosis* like that in xciii. 1). De Witt's 'In thy splendour ride on to victory' requires the insertion of a preposition.—

In behalf of good faith, &c. The king is to take the field against all oppression both within and without Israel's boundaries. He is to protect the faithful as opposed to liars and deceivers, the righteous as opposed to breakers of the law, and the humble as opposed to the proud. 'Good faith' or 'truthfulness' is, strictly speaking, a department of 'righteousness,' just as 'humbleness (of mind)' is a condition of that 'righteousness' which Jehovah loves¹ (so that a prophet can say, 'seek righteousness, seek humbleness,' Zeph. ii. 3). On the conception of '*anāvāh* (idealised poverty) in passages like this, see on ix. 13. Others suppose the three qualities named to belong to the king—'because of (thy) faithfulness, justice, and condescension' (cf. for this last xviii. 37, Zech. ix. 9); this view, like the former, assumes a transposition. The received text, however, gives one simple and one compound virtue—'faithfulness and humbleness-innocence' (or, 'condescension-justice,' if the king be referred to). There being no complete parallel in Hebrew for an apposition of this kind, one might follow out the hint given in the points, and read '*anvath*;' this, however, gives an unsuitable sense, 'righteous humbleness' or 'just condescension,' and it is much simpler to assume a transposition as above.²—**Terrible.** The word is poor; we might paraphrase 'fearful-glorious' (see on lxv. 6).

6 Let the peoples, &c. Certainly an idealistic but not a selfishly patriotic hope. The poet longs for an universal empire of truth and goodness, and by a bold anticipation awards this empire to the king whose prowess he celebrates.

7 Thy throne, &c. If we accept the text, 'Elohim' may (1) here be a title of the king. In defence of this, observe that the title Elohim is applied to the judicial authority (Ex. xxi. 6, xxii. 8), to Moses (Ex. vii. 1), and to the apparition of Samuel (1 Sam. xxviii. 13), and that a prophet, looking into the future, declares the Davidic family to be 'as Elohim, as the (or, an) angel of Jehovah' (Zech. xii. 8). Again, in a Temanite inscription, discovered by Dr. Euting, we find אלהים used for 'princes,' and אלהים in a Palmyrene (Neubauer, *Studia Biblica*, p. 212). This use of the word was therefore a Semitic idiom. The one conclusive objection to this view is, that in the very next verse 'Elohim' is used with distinct and sole reference to Jehovah (unless indeed with St. Jerome and Bishop Pearson we take 'Elohim' there too as a vocative³)—a use which corresponds to the pervading tendency of the Korahite psalms. It would be unnatural to interpret the word differently here. Or (2), 'Elohim' may be the predicate, the noun, however, which is the subject forming an unexpressed element in the predicate; comp. 'thine eyes are doves' (Cant. i. 15), for 'eyes of doves.' Thus, 'thy throne is God' will be equivalent to 'thy throne is God's throne,' i.e. as permanent as God's throne. But this

¹ Cf. A. Ritschl, *Die Lehre der Rechtfertigung*, &c., ii. 564.

² Some will ask, Why not adopt A.V.'s rendering (cf. Sept.), 'and meekness (and) righteousness,' the construction being as in *v. 9 a*? Because this spoils the rhythm of the verse, as the authors of the points appear to have felt.

³ Pearson, 'Being those words are spoken unto God as well as of God' (*An Exposition of the Creed*, 1676, p. 98). Of course we might equally well say, 'unto the king as well as of the king,' and Pearson himself admits that there may be a reference to the anointing of a king of Israel (Solomon). St. Jerome, 'Satis miror cur Aquilam non, ut cœperat in primo versiculo [ὁ θρόνος σου θεῆ], vocativo casu interpretatus sit, sed nominativo, bis nominans Deum qui supradictum unxerit Deum' (*Epist.* 104, quoted by Pearson).

is very harsh, and would a Hebrew reader have understood the phrase thus? A dove has really eyes, but God has only metaphorically a throne: would the reader have naturally thought of 'God's throne'? If the Hebrew words form a separate clause, surely the only rendering can be, 'Thy throne is God,' or 'God is thy throne,' neither of which expressions would be consistent with the religion of the psalmists. (The latter rendering, however, is actually that of Döderlein, who compares 'God is my rock,' lxii. 3.) The sum of the matter is that the only natural rendering of the received text is that of the versions, 'Thy throne, O God,' and the only natural interpretation that of the Targum, 'Thy throne, O Jehovah.' But is such an abrupt transition to Jehovah conceivable? Must not the poet's idea be this: that the king's success is assured, because *his* throne (not Jehovah's) is founded in righteousness? So in substance Saadia (see Ibn Ezra). Sense and rhythm are equally furthered by Bickell's correction.

8 **Has anointed thee, &c.** An official anointing (lxxix. 21) is not meant here; the phrase is symbolic for 'gladdened thee with prosperity' (see on xxiii. 5, and cf. Isa. lxi. 3). For construction, cf. Am. vi. 6.—**Above thy fellows.** A singular expression. Are these companions the other members of the royal caste (e.g. the kings of Egypt and Assyria), or (if a N. Israelitish king be meant) the other nobles, any of whom might, through the application of the elective principle, have risen, or even yet rise, to the throne (cf. Isa. xxxiv. 12)? The latter is Ewald's view; but in this connection the passage seems rather an idealisation parallel to that in lxxxix. 28 *b*.

9 Here the psalm becomes a marriage-song. First, the nuptial dress of the bridegroom is described; then, out of the natural order, his entrance into his palace. **Myrrh and aloes** are combined as in Prov. vii. 17, Cant. iv. 14. **Cassia**

is only mentioned again as the name of one of Job's daughters (Job xlii. 14). For the omission of 'and,' cf. Deut. xxix. 22, Isa. i. 13. In each of these three passages, the two objects coupled by *Waw* are regarded as having a specially close connexion. Neither *v.* 5 nor Job xlii. 9 is parallel; in the latter passage *Waw* should be supplied before *Çofar*.—**Are all thy garments.** It is as if they were one mass of precious perfume. Construction as in Isa. v. 12.—**Out of the ivory palace** (the Heb. has 'palaces'—the plural of extension). Cf. 1 Kings xxii. 39, Am. iii. 15. 'Ivory' = adorned with ivory, like the Ninevite palaces and the chambers of Menelaus (*Odys.* iv. 72, 73).—**Stringed instruments, &c.** Music welcomes the king as he enters the palace to receive his bride. How could music be omitted in such a festival? This view of the line is not absolutely certain, but is infinitely preferable to Bishop Horsley's, who renders, 'from cabinets of ivory of Armenia (cf. Targum) they have pleased thee' (similarly Dr. Kay, except as regards 'Armenia,' which comes from the Targum; he compares Prov. xxvii. 9). For the rendering of *minnim* (so read), see crit. note on cl. 4.

10 A chronological leap is taken. The king is in his harem; among his wives are kings' daughters, but the post of honour is given to the newly espoused Tyrian princess.—**The consort.** Heb. *shēgal*. The word is found in late books (see Lexicon), but this may be accidental, especially if it be rightly inserted, for *shālāl*, in Judg. v. 30 (Deborah's song being assumed to be north-Palestinian).

11-13 The poet, as a fatherly friend, offers advice to the inexperienced princess. He then holds out in prospect the rich presents which her influential position will bring to her.—**Thine own people.** See introd. and comp. Isa. ii. 5, if we may render there, 'thou hast cast off thy people (i.e. the

ways of thy people), O house of Jacob.' In any case, the exhortation doubtless has special reference to religious usages.—**And unto thee**, &c. So Bickell. The text, as pointed and accented, is rendered either, 'And, O daughter of Tyre, with gifts shall they sue for thy favour, (even) the richest of people' (so St. Jerome, Hupfeld, Hitzig, Wickes), or, 'And the inhabitants (lit., daughter) of Tyre shall sue for thy favour with gifts, (even) the richest of people' (so Ewald, Delitzsch, Perowne). Against the former view it is urged that though *Waw* may be prefixed to a vocative, this is elsewhere done only when another vocative precedes (except in the doubtful passage, Jer. xx. 12), e.g. Prov. viii. 5. Against the latter, that 'daughter' is not a collective term, equivalent to 'inhabitants,' but a personification; even in Mic. iv. 10, where the statements made of the daughter would suggest putting the verb in the plural, the singular is preferred. Both views, then, are objectionable; and if we next try the rhythm of the verse, it is clear that the distich will be unsymmetrical, unless we divide as proposed above, and either supplement line 1 as

suggested by Bickell, or else, in a manner favoured by the Targum (comp. Sept., Pesh.), rendering 'And unto thee shall the daughter of Tyre come with gifts' (so in the main Böttcher). The view which I have taken of *v.* 11 *b*, and the use of *bath* for 'damsel' in *v.* 11 *a*, justify me in adopting Bickell's suggestion.

14-16 Another violation of the natural order, like that in *v.* 9. First, the attire of the queen is celebrated; then the bridal procession.—**Of pearls**. The text reading is 'within,' i.e. not 'inwardly,' as opposed to 'outwardly,' as if the poet meant 'her greatest charms are those which do not strike the eye' (so even Herder), but in the inner apartment. The context requires Krochmal's correction.

17, 18 Closing wishes for the king and his poet. **In all the earth**. For many peoples will have become the king's loyal subjects (*vv.* 6, 18). Not only the character (*vv.* 5, 7) but the fortunes of the king are idealised. But we might equally well render, 'in all the land,' i.e. throughout the kingdom.

PSALM XLVI.

LUTHER'S psalm. The theme is the same as in the two following psalms—God is the Ruler of the nations. The three strophes are singularly well-marked and symmetrical, if at least, to the advantage of the sense, we restore the noble refrain at the end of the first. The third strophe clearly refers to some recent danger, possibly to the invasion of Sennacherib. The refrain reminds us of 'Immanu-el' in Isa. viii. 8, 10, and Ps. xlviii. presents points of contact with Isa. xxxiii. Notice the divine titles *Elyōn* (*v.* 5; cf. on vii. 18) and 'Jehovah Sabáoth' (see on xxiv. 10).

- 2 Elohim is our refuge and stronghold,
fully proved as a help in troubles :
- 3 Therefore will we not fear, though the earth should change,
and though the mountains should sink into the ocean's midst ;
- 4 Let the waters thereof roar and foam,
let the mountains quake at the insolence thereof :

[Jehovah Sabáoth is with us ;
our sure retreat is Jacob's God.]

- 5 [His lovingkindness is] a river, the arms whereof make glad
the city of God, the sanctuary of the Most High.
6 Elohim is in the midst of her ; she totters not ;
Elohim helps her when the morn appears.
7 Nations roar, kingdoms totter :
he utters his voice ; the earth melts away.
8 Jehovah Sabáoth is with us ;
our sure retreat is Jacob's God.
9 Come, behold the works of Jehovah,
who appoints such astonishments in the earth,
10 Who makes wars to cease unto the end of the earth, *where?*
who breaks the bow, and cuts the spear in sunder ;
who burns the chariot in the fire.
11 'Give up, and be sure that I am Elohim :
I will exalt myself among the nations,
I will exalt myself in the earth.'
12 Jehovah Sabáoth is with us ;
our sure retreat is Jacob's God.

2 **Fully proved.** Or, 'fully proving himself;' more strictly, 'letting himself be found exceedingly' (comp. 1 Chr. xxviii. 9, Isa. lxxv. 1).

3 **Should change.** This may perhaps pass as a vaguer and more awful expression than 'should be moved.' But I doubt the text.

5 An antithesis to the stormy sea. [**His lovingkindness is] a river,** &c. Rhythm, syntax, and sense are equally helped by the word supplied. Even putting aside the two former, it is clear that 'a river, (that is) the arms thereof make glad the city of God' is not a very intelligible sentence. Some explanation of the river is indispensable to prevent us from taking it literally on the analogy of the ocean and its waves in *vv.* 3, 4 ; in xxxvi. 9, a parallel passage, such an explanation is suggested. If we reject the above 'restoration' of the text, we are reduced to render with Hitzig, 'A stream, whose arms . . . is the Holy One of the dwelling of the 'Most High' (for

the circuitous phraseology Hitzig compares xlvi. 2, lxxv. 5). This can be supported by Isa. xxxiii. 21, where the presence of Israel's God is said to place Jerusalem on an equality with cities like Babylon and Nineveh, but is less natural than the view adopted above. 'Lovingkindness' is also the prevailing note in the cognate forty-eighth psalm (see xlvi. 10). This, therefore, is just the word to supply in this connexion (comp. also *v.* 6 with xlvi. 10). On Sept.'s reading, see crit. note.—**The arms whereof.** De Witt, 'whose conduits.' If accuracy is desired, 'canals' would be better (comp. the synonymous word in Isa. xxxiii. 21). The 'river' is a broad, sea-like stream such as the Euphrates or Tigris, with artificial canals. But in rendering a poem, I prefer 'arms' or 'branches' (see on lxxv. 10). It is strange that there should still be some literalists (e.g. Mr. King, in *Bypaths of Bible Knowledge*, vol. iv.) who look for the 'river' underneath the Temple-hill, and explain it, not

indeed any longer of the pool of Siloam, but at least of some perennial stream which was the source of the water-supply of ancient Jerusalem. But the psalmist must mean a 'river' worthier of the name (*nāhār*).—**Make glad.** To be glad in Jehovah is a common religious phrase (ix. 3, xxxii. 11, &c.)—**The city of God,** i.e. the city where the 'great king' is enthroned (xlvi. 3, 6, xlviii. 3).—**The sanctuary.** Lit., 'the holy place of the dwelling.' 'Holy' = inviolable. Mount Zion is used interchangeably with Jerusalem (comp. ii. 6). If the one is 'holy,' so also is the other. We are on the road to the phrase 'the holy city,' found in the later books (see my note on Isa. xlviii. 2).

6 **Elohim helps her,** &c. Whenever danger threatens, as of

late, a short 'night of weeping' (xxx. 6) gives place to morning brightness.

7 **Nations roar,** &c. The context suggests that this is a hypothetical clause, 'If nations roar,' &c.; but it is also admissible to take it as a retrospect, 'Nations roared . . . earth melted away' (strictly, 'began to melt').

9 **The works of Jehovah.** A well-supported variant is 'the works of Elohim' (see De Rossi and Baer). The alteration was a natural one; we find the same reading in the imitative passage lxvi. 5.—**Astonishments,** i.e. astonishing, stupendous things. Or we may equally well render, 'devastations.'

10 That the danger has been averted is represented as due to a word from God (comp. Zech. ix. 10).

PSALM XLVII.

STRICTLY speaking, the first of the theocratic or 'accession' psalms (see on xciii.)

- 2 O all ye peoples, clap your hands together,
shout ye unto Elohim in ringing tones.
- 3 For Jehovah is most high and terrible,
a great king over all the earth.
- 4 He subdued peoples under us,
and nations under our feet;
- 5 He chose out our inheritance for us,
the pride of Jacob whom he loved.
- 6 God is gone up with a shout,
Jehovah with the sound of the trumpet.
- 7 Make melody unto God, make melody,
make melody unto our King, make melody.
- 8 For God is the King of all the earth;
(make melody with an artful song);
- 9 God is become King over the nations:
God has seated himself upon his holy throne.
- 10 Princes of peoples have gathered together
with the people of Abraham's God:
for to God belong the shields of the earth,
greatly is he become exalted.

*the greatest
king of*

*the name
the cry*

skillfully

3 **Terrible.** So Deut. vii. 21, x. 17, and often in the Psalms. There is no allusion here to a 'dark nature-principle in God' (see on lxv. 6).

4, 5 A retrospect of the subjection of the Canaanites and the conquest of Canaan.—**The pride of Jacob**, i.e. the goodly land of Israel (Jer. iii. 19). The phrase seems taken from Amos, who, however, seems to use it in a different sense or senses (Am. vi. 8).

6 **God is gone up.** The phraseology is suggested by those early times in which the presence of the 'ark of Elohim' was regarded as the pledge of victory; but the meaning is simply that God is no longer so visibly working for Israel as before, the need of a special interposition having passed away. 'Gone up,' viz. in the original sense of the phrase, to the sanctuary on Mount Zion; but the contemporaries of the poet would more naturally think of the heavenly temple (comp. ciii. 19), where in the strictest sense Jehovah had a 'holy' or inviolable throne (*v.* 9). See on xxiv. 7, lxxviii. 19, xcii. 9.

7 **Our King.** Not merely in the common Semitic sense of 'King of heaven,' nor yet in the *old* Hebrew theocratic sense ('I will not rule over you . . . Jehovah shall rule over you,' Judg. viii. 23; comp.

Deut. xxxiii. 5), but in that sense which became increasingly prevalent in later times, of Israel's and the world's Ruler. See on xciii. 1.

8, 9 The theme of the psalm. In *v.* 8 *b*, most render, 'chant ye a song of praise,' but how the Heb. *maskil* comes to mean a 'song of praise' is not clear. Delitzsch himself, who adopts this rendering, says that *maskil* properly means only 'a pious meditation' (introd. to Ps. xxxii.) I follow Ewald and Riehm. Cf. Sept., *ψάλας σπουδαίας*.

10 A vision of the future (comp. cii. 22) is here described as a present fact. The Hebrew text has no preposition before 'the people;' hence R.V. renders, '(To be) the people of the God of Abraham.' But what of 'Jacob whom he loved' (*v.* 5)?—**Abraham's God**, Abraham being 'the first of the confessors of God' (*Chagiga*, 3 *a*) and 'the father of many nations' (Gen. xvii. 4).—**For to God**, &c. Exactly parallel to 1 Sam. ii. 8, 'for to Jehovah belong the pillars of the earth.' 'Shields' = rulers, as Hos. iv. 18. Bickell, to improve the rhythm, changes 'God' (Elohim) into 'Yahvè,' and inserts at the end 'above all gods;' comp. xcvii. 9. 'Yahvè' would certainly come in well, as explanatory of 'the God of Abraham.' But it is not clear why rhythm is to be always so uniform.

PSALM XLVIII.

Is this a psalm of praise for Sennacherib's overthrow (comp. Isa. xxxvii. 18, 20), or a post-Exile pilgrim-song (cf. Ps. cxxii.)? The significance of the psalm will vary much according to our answer. Ewald has remarked on its elegance as a lyric. The first strophe is eulogistic, the second historical, the third and fourth pervaded by a personal reference—to whom? to the citizens? or to pilgrim-visitors? In the latter case, one cannot help referring to the two lovely *terzine* of Dante beginning, 'E quasi peregrin che si ricrea' (*Parad.* xxxi. 43-8).

- 2 Great is Jehovah, and highly to be praised
in the city of our God, his holy mountain. His
- 3 Beauteous in elevation, the joy of the whole earth,
is mount Zion, the city of the great king
- 4 Elohim in the palaces thereof
has made himself known as a sure retreat.

- 5 For, behold, the kings combined—
they came onward together.
- 6 When they saw, they were amazed—
were confounded—were scared away.
- 7 Shuddering took hold of them there,
agony, as of one in travail.
- 8 By an east wind thou didst break in pieces
ships of Tarshish.
- 9 Even as we have heard, so have we seen
in the city of Jehovah Sabáoth,
in the city of our God ;
Elohim establishes it for ever.
- 10 We think of thy lovingkindness, O God,
in the midst of thy temple.
- 11 According to thy name, O God, so is thy praise
unto the ends of the earth :
thy right hand is full of righteousness.
- 12 Let mount Zion rejoice, let Judah's daughters exult,
because of thy judgments.
- 13 Walk about Zion, and make the round of her,
reckon up the towers thereof.
- 14 Mark well her rampart,
study her palaces,
that ye may tell the next generation,
- 15 That there is Elohim—
our God—he it is that shall lead us
for ever and for ever.

2 **His holy mountain.** Mount Zion symbolises Jerusalem (see on xlv. 5).

3 **Beauteous in elevation, the joy of the whole earth.** Jerusalem, above all other great capitals, is a mountain-city. But it is Mount Zion which the poet specially refers to, the 'elevation' of which in ancient times well deserved the epithet 'beautiful.' It is a question, however, whether this very obvious explanation exhausts the meaning. The prophets had taught men to look forward to a wondrous exaltation of the temple-mount (see Isa. ii. 2, Mic. iv. 1), loftiness being an essential element in the conception of God's 'holiness' (cf. Isa. lvii. 15). It is conceivable that the psalmist

may have lived by faith in that ideal time when this feature of 'holiness' would be exemplified in the sacred hill in such a way as to excite the admiring joy of 'all the earth.' Another poet speaks in similar terms of Mount Zion (l. 2)—probably he had read our psalm—while a third uses still more completely parallel phraseology of Jerusalem as a whole (Lam. ii. 15).—**Is mount Zion, the city of the great king.** After 'mount Zion' the received text inserts 'the utmost parts of the north,' from which Sir Charles Warren, like Lightfoot before him, infers that Zion, the City of David, stood on the north side of the city. But, first, have we a right to expect a topographical description here, and

*obj. gen
of Thee
re. universal*

next, would this be the form that such a description would take? The answer must surely be negative. Hence some critics have sought for another solution. The use of the same phrase, 'the utmost parts (or, recesses) of the north' in Isa. xiv. 13, with reference apparently to a mythic mountain of the gods,¹ has suggested to them that a parallel is intended between the Israelitish and the Babylonian Olympus; or, in Halévy's modified form of the view, that the Hebrews regarded Mount Zion as a miniature of the immense 'world-mountain' of Semitic mythology, crowned as it was with the sanctuary of Jehovah, and having at its feet the awful valley of Hinnom—the supposed entry to the region of the underworld.² We might indeed support Halévy's view by Isa. xxix. 1, 2, where 'Ariel' probably alludes to the name of the Assyrian 'world-mountain' Arâlu. But I would ask, how can 'the recesses of the north' be equivalent to 'a mountain like that mythic one in the far north'?³ The words thus rendered, though found by the Septuagint translator, are surely a gloss, due, perhaps, to a scribe who noted in the margin two catch-words from Isa. xiv. 13 which seemed a parallel passage—words which found their way into the text. See article in *Expositor*, Jan. 1888, p. 24.

4 **In the castles thereof.** The word 'armôn (again in *v.* 14 and cxlii. 7) will include both 'burgs' or castles and high (and strong) houses (see on *vv.* 13, 14). The former were indispensable for security (see on *vv.* 13, 14); chief among them was the Baris, fortified by the early Maccabees as a safeguard of the temple against the Acra. Baris (in plur.) is the Sept.'s word here; it

seems cognate with Heb. *bîra* (Ass. *bîrat*), which is equivalent to 'armôn (comp. Neh. ii. 8, 2 Kings xv. 25).

5 The poet describes the fact on which he bases the foregoing assertions. **The kings**, i.e. the Assyrian generals, 'altogether kings' (Isa. x. 8).—**Combined.** *Parad. Lost*, ii. 750-1, 'with them combin'd in bold conspiracy.'

6 **They saw it**, viz. Jerusalem. But the Hebrew has simply 'they saw.' The opposite of Cæsar's '*Veni, vidi, vici.*'

8 Probably an allegorical description of the overthrow of the hostile power. Comp. Isa. xxix. 6, xxxiii. 21. Sharpe,⁴ indeed, sees an allusion to the destruction of the Tyrian vessels which were carrying supplies to the army of Sennacherib at the siege of Pelusium (comp. Herod ii. 141). But a transition from plain description to allegory (comp. my note on Isa. xxxiii. 21) is quite in the style of Hebrew writers (comp. lxxviii. 9), and the poet simply speaks (see *v.* 9) of that which he has seen.

9 **Heard . . . seen.** Does the poet mean that the lessons of the ear have now become truths of personal experience (comp. Job xlii. 5) through the recent wonderful deliverance of his native city? Or that he is now at length able to realise the facts of history by actually seeing the palaces of Jerusalem, so stately and strong, in this his first pilgrimage to the holy city?—**For ever.** See on lxxviii. 69.

10 **We think**, &c. 'We seek to realise thy love' (comp. last note); this is the full meaning of the verb (lit., 'to make like'). The temple is the place for pious meditation, as lxxiii. 17.

11 **According to thy name**,

¹ On which see Lenormant, *Les origines*; Schrader, *K. A. T.*, pp. 389, 390; Jeremias, *Die bab.-ass. Vorstellungen*, &c., pp. 59-61.

² *Revue archéologique*, juillet 1882, p. 52, where, for the description of Hinnom, the Talmudic treatise *Erubin* 19 is quoted.

³ Hence Dr. Bredenkamp, 'Even in the uttermost north, in Nineveh, Elohim is known as a strong defence through the recent overthrow of Sennacherib' (*Gesetz und Propheten*, pp. 145, 146).

⁴ *History of the Hebrew Nation*, p. 131

&c. Many names are 'named' (Eph. i. 21), but only one receives such high, impassioned, world-wide praise as Jehovah. *World-wide* (comp. *v.* 2), partly because, by an emotional fallacy, the psalmists reckon upon the sympathy of heathen bystanders, partly because the dispersion of the Jews was by this time, speaking rhetorically, world-wide (comp. my note on Isa. xli. 9).

12 **Judah's daughters**, i.e. the provincial towns (as 'thou and thy daughters' (Ezek. xvi. 48). For the whole personification, comp. Isa. xl. 9).

13, 14 Either the *citizens* are bidden to inspect Jerusalem, to convince themselves of its freedom from injury, or the *pilgrims* exhort one another to impress the sights of Zion on their memories, guiding their eyes, as Dante says, 'now up, now down, and now all round about' (*Parad.* l.c.) The former view is probable enough. The unhurt condition of those high houses was well worthy of mention if, as in Amos's time (Am. vi. 11), even the mansions of the nobles were liable to 'breaches' and 'clefts.' Maundrell (*Travels*, p. 125) speaks of houses at Damascus, the walls of which were of mud, though the doors were adorned with carved and inlaid marble portals (cf. on Isa. ix. 10, Jer. ii. 34).—**Reckon up the towers.** 'Towers' there were from the first in the fortress-city; Hezekiah's zeal for fortification is mentioned in 2 Chr. xxxii. 5, nor did he stand alone. And yet the admiring emphasis of the psalmist seems to point to a time subsequent to some great over-

throw. Ps. cxvii. produces the same impression, and both psalms must be compared with the accounts of the fortification of Mount Zion in 1 Macc. iv. 60, x. 11, xiii. 52, and of Jerusalem in 1 Macc. xiii. 10, xiv. 37.—**The next generation**, i.e. not the Christian Church (as virtually Bishop Alexander), but the Jews of the next age, who at any rate would not know how splendid Jerusalem had appeared on the morrow of its great danger; or else, those children of the pilgrims who could not as yet follow their fathers' example.

15 **That there is Elohim** (cf. Isa. xxv. 9). Or, 'that this one (who has so wonderfully protected Zion) is God.' But the immediate context favours the first rendering. Even if ה' be not adverbial but adjectival the sense must be that in yonder buildings God is manifestly present, or, in the old Hebrew phrase, that Zion is a 'Beth-el.' 'Where is thy God?' (see xlii. 3) is a question which psalmists will henceforth be able to answer with flashing eyes and erect head.—**He it is**, &c. This is certainly a near approach to the actual words of the poet. It involves transposing 'for ever and for ever' from the last line but one to the last. Delitzsch well remarks that the close of the psalm, as it now stands, is not full-sounding enough (he of course rejects the last word of the received text—'*al-mûth*, perhaps a misplaced musical note; comp. '*al-mûth labbên*, ix. 1). The transposition proposed by Bickell, which follows the analogy of xxviii. 9 *b*, sufficiently remedies this defect.

PSALM XLIX.

ONE of the finest didactic psalms, containing, as Hupfeld remarks, not merely consolation for righteous sufferers (like Ps. xxxvii.), but a real, however crude and imperfect, theodicy. Compare it with Pss. xxxix. and lxxiii., and *vv.* 15, 16 with xvi. 10, 11, xvii. 14, 15.

2 Hear ye this, all ye peoples,
give ear, all ye dwellers in the world,

- 3 Both those of low and those of high degree,
rich and poor alike.
- 4 My mouth shall speak wisdom,
and the musing of my heart shall be of understanding.
- 5 I will incline mine ear to a parable,
I will open my riddle to the lyre.
- 6 Wherefore should I fear in the days of misfortune,
though the malice of my foes surround me,
- 7 Even of such as trust in their riches,
and make their boast of their great wealth ?
- 8 Nevertheless none can set himself free,
nor give unto God his ransom ;
- 9 (Yea, too costly is the redemption of man's soul,
and one must let that alone for ever ;)
- 10 So that he should live on perpetually,
and should not see the pit.
- 11 Truly, see he must that (even) wise men die,
the fool and the brutish man alike perish,
and give up their riches to others.
- 12 The graves are their houses for ever,
their habitations for generation after generation ;
[forgotten are] they whose names
men spoke with honour in the lands.
- 13 But man in splendour hath no continuance ;
he is become as the beasts that are cut off.
- 14 This is the fortune of those who have self-confidence,
and of those who after them applaud their speech.
- 15 Like sheep, they are folded in Sheól ;
death is their shepherd, and their form shall waste away ;
Sheól shall be their castle for ever,
and the upright shall trample upon them in the morning.
- 16 Nevertheless God shall set free my soul,
from the hand of Sheól shall he take me.
- 17 Be not thou afraid when a man becomes rich,
when the glory of his house increases ;
- 18 For he will not take away all that when he dies,—
his glory will not descend after him.
- 19 Although in his lifetime he bless his soul,
(and men praise thee that thou doest well unto thyself,)
- 20 He shall go to the generation of his fathers,
who shall never see the light.
- 21 Man, being in splendour but without understanding,
is become as the beasts that are cut off.

5 **I will incline mine ear.** This wise man claims inspiration in prophet-like words (comp. *Job and Solomon*, p. 43). Not so lxxviii. 2.—**Parable . . . riddle.** See *ibid.* p. 75.

6 **The malice of my foes.** A reproduction rather than a version. But 'the iniquity of those who would trip me up' is lengthy.

7 What does **trusting in riches** mean? Making it a god, some will reply. Yes; but 'a god' in the primitive sense, i.e. one who can protect against adversity. The psalmist regards such confidence as a delusion, because a *premature* death will overtake the ungodly rich (see on v. 15).

8 **Nevertheless.** 'Sicher doch' (Ewald). As the particle indicates, this is one of the fixed points in the psalmist's philosophy of life. (Comp. *Korán*, ii. 117, 'And fear the day when no soul shall pay a recompense for a soul,' &c., also that fine passage, *II.* ix. 401, &c.) It is only half the truth, as he well knows, and in v. 16 the other half is given. The received text can be ingeniously defended, but is certainly wrong. Psalms xxxix. and lxxiii. show us how these wise men expressed their conclusions. They expressed them piecemeal, and each fragment was introduced by the appropriate particle (אֲנִי). It would be strange if v. 16 had no counterpart, introduced, as it is itself, in the characteristic way. The received text runs, according to the Revised Version,

None (of them) can by any means redeem
his brother,
Nor give to God a ransom for him.

This rendering, however, inserts one word which is not in the original ('his' before 'brother'), and does not take notice of the unusual position of the object or accusative (i.e. that the clause begins not with אֲנִי, but with אֲנִי). We surely want such a word as 'even' prefixed to ('his) brother.' Ewald would therefore take אֲנִי to be an error of the

ear (both the ear and the eye being fertile sources of false readings) for אֲנִי, and render as above. If we keep the received text (which agrees with the Sept.), we must suppose a digression. There may have been in popular Hebrew, as well as in popular Arabic phraseology (see *Hamāsa*, i. 3, 1), such an expression as 'May I be thy ransom,' i.e. 'May I bear the evil destined for thee. There may have been a Hebrew dirge like that Syrian one from which Wetzstein translates two couplets thus:—

Ah! if he could be ransomed! Truly I
would pay the ransom!
Redeem me, O my dear kinsfolk, with
steeds of noble limbs.
Ah! if he could be ransomed! Truly I
would pay the ransom!
Redeem me, O dear brother mine, with
pure virgins.

It is possible that the digression was suggested by a sudden recollection of language such as this. The poet may thus illustrate the idea that, just as Dives can do no real harm to those whom he oppresses (see v. 6), so he can do no real good to those whom he would fain befriend. Digressions, however, are not to be expected in a didactic psalm like this. The leading thought is the perishableness of life without God. This, and no subordinate idea, requires illustration. It is Dives himself who will, when his hour comes, be unable to shake off the hand of death. It is possible that the false reading אֲנִי ('brother') was introduced in opposition to the later Jewish doctrine that the living could redeem the dead by almsgiving (the same word for 'to redeem' was currently used on this subject which we find in the psalm). See Weber, *Alt-synagogale Theologie*, p. 315.—**Set himself free.** Or, 'redeem himself.'

11 **Wise men die.** If the text is right, 'wise men in their own eyes' (Isa. v. 21), i.e. perhaps, the secularist portion of the class of 'wise men,' who had no positive

religious belief (Prov. iii. 7). See on *v.* 13.—**The fool**, &c. Characteristic terms; see lxxiii. 22, xcii. 7, xciv. 8.

12 The reading adopted here has at least equal authority with the Massoretic, and it alone suits the context. If the palaces of these men were referred to, it would at any rate not be the indestructibility of these buildings on which the poet would dwell, but the parting between the rich man and his splendid home ('Linquenda tellus et domus'). And if Egypt and Babylon may furnish examples, it was not in any irreligious spirit that rich men built houses to defy time, and they rested their hopes of fame chiefly on their temples. Thus Usertsen I., the founder of the great temple at Heliopolis (see Jer. xliii. 13) says—

Let my name be the temple, my monument the lake.

Immortality is a glorious deed.

There is no desolation by the effect of time, the works will last:

It is a striving for glories;

It is an enterprise of a perfect name;

It is the watching over an eternal work.¹

—**Their houses for ever.** First, in the sense that the sepulchres of the rich were carved out or built up with a view to permanence (comp. Isa. xxii. 16), and next, that the grave (a type of Sheól) is, in the popular phrase, 'an everlasting house' (Eccles. xii. 5; see the commentators).—**Forgotten are they**, &c. Something must be supplied; sense and rhythm require it. Observe that the context speaks of honouring men's names, and that 'land of forgetfulness' is a synonym of Sheól equally with 'the grave' in lxxxviii. 12, 13.—**In the lands**, viz. in those which these rich men owned.

13 A poetic anticipation of Eccles. iii. 18, 19. The psalmist agrees with Abelard, 'cum fere omnes animales sint homines, ac paucissimi spirituales' (*Introd. ad Theol.*, p. 1047). He has already

told us that there is a wisdom which is no better than folly, inasmuch as, to use Koheleth's words, 'one chance happens to them all' (Eccles. ii. 14). Such wisdom may have a temporary use (*ib.* ii. 13), but in the end 'what pre-eminence hath the wise above the fool' (*ib.* vi. 8)? Our psalmist, however, is a wise man of another stamp, who knows that true understanding gives the pledge of continuance, and he expresses this by a significant rhyme in the two slightly different forms of the refrain (*v.* 13, *yālīn* 'hath continuance'; *v.* 21, *yābhīn* 'understandeth'; the Sept., however, reads *yābhīn* in both verses).—

In splendour. Probably this goes with the subject, not with the predicate. 'Fearfully am I distinguished' (cxxxix. 15). Is the poet thinking of the cosmogony in Gen. i., like the author of Ps. viii.?

As the beasts. Comp. lxxiii. 20 (note). In one sense this verse (and *v.* 21) may be called the *māshāl* (*v.* 5); it draws a moral lesson from the outer world of nature.

14 This verse closes the foregoing description; comp. the form of Job xviii. 21, xx. 29. 'This' = such.—**The fortune.** Lit., 'the way' (as xxxvii. 5).—**Self-confidence.** 'Folly' would be too weak a rendering here, though suggested by *k'sil* in *v.* 11 *b*; 'confidence' (see Job iv. 6, xxxi. 24) would be better, but still too indefinite. The context shows that an ill-grounded self-trust is meant—in short, obstinacy. So lxxxv. 9.—**Who after them**, &c. Comp. lxxiii. 10 (received text), where the pernicious influence of false teaching may, as here, be referred to.

15 If *v.* 13 is the *māshāl* ('parable') *v.* 15 is the *khida* ('riddle') of the poem. To us, that is, not to the original readers. They had an unerring key to the sense, having the same circle of ideas and images as the author, and sharing his passionate resentment at the wicked, which mirrors itself in an abrupt,

¹ Stern, *Records of the Past*, xii. 54, 55.

sharp style. A parallel from Arabic literature may throw light on the imagery. It occurs in an Arabic poem in the *Hamāsa* which is probably of pre-Islamic origin. A plague had smitten the tribe to which the poet belonged, and the tribe is therefore compared to a herd of camels, with Death for their herdsman, 'to whose stall they must all come home, some sooner, some later.'

And to-day they wander, a trembling
herd, their herdsman Death:
One speeds away to his rest at eve, one
stays till dawn.¹

Like most figures from pastoral life, this image admits of more than one application. Take this from a fine work by the Abbé Gratry. 'La masse des hommes, qui tourne le dos à la mort et qui fuit devant elle, constitue le troupeau de la mort. La mort est le pasteur, et le genre humain le troupeau. Plus on tourne le dos, plus elle frappe. Plus on va vite, plus elle vous écrase de fardeaux.'² But is not the interpretation of the Arab poet that which most completely corresponds to the condensed allegory of the figure? What reason is there for not adopting a similar one in our passage, especially as in a parallel psalm the ungodly rich men are said to be 'swept off' in a moment by 'terrible events' (lxxiii. 19)? Thus *v.* 15 goes beyond *v.* 11, where the psalmist describes the fate of dull, insensible men in general (rich, but not 'towards God'); it expresses the author's conviction as to the future of those violently hostile rich men spoken of in *vv.* 6, 7. Dull insensibility in these psalms is by no means synonymous with active hostility to the cause of God. It is a mental disorder which might for a moment attack even the righteous (lxxiii. 22), and is in one passage made to consist in a shortsighted view of

the career of the ungodly (xcii. 7, 8). The dull man cannot wait God's time for retribution to the ungodly (who are therefore distinguished from the dull). This determines the sense in which **Death is their shepherd**. He is so, not merely (as *Speaker's Comm.* takes it) by ruling his victims like Pluto, in his own sad realm, but by 'stealing upon them' when in the height of their prosperity, so that they 'go down alive (in full strength) into Sheól' (lv. 16). Those who are less violently hostile 'die,' 'perish' (*v.* 11); but these men are overthrown 'as in a moment' (lxxiii. 19). Sheól is called **their castle for ever** (comp. *v.* 12), because mythology represented Hades as an underground city with gates (see on Isa. xxxviii. 10). At the close of the verse (or quatrain), we have the triumphant demeanour of the righteous. The description is an unpleasing one, but is outlined with more reserve than that in Isa. lxvi. 24. Line 4 must of course be taken in connexion with the latter part of line 2; the 'wasting' of the 'forms' certainly does not take place in Sheól (as the received text has it). And what of the time-definition? Can the 'morning' be that of the resurrection? If so, it is a resurrection of the righteous only which is meant; for the ungodly 'never see the light' (*v.* 20). But, as Del. remarks, not even in the latest psalms does the hope of the resurrection find a living expression. 'Morning' is a symbol of deliverance (see on xxx. 6).

16 The counterpart of *v.* 8. 'None can set himself free,' but 'my soul shall God set free.' The psalmist is the representative of the class of those religious wise men who have learned the secret of true 'life.' For surely it is the weakest of explanations to say that he rejoices thus in the prospect of mere deliverance from the danger of death. A few years later, and the

¹ Mr. Lyall's metrical version; comp. Freytag, Arabic text, p. 375, Latin version, ii. 21.

² Gratry, *De la connaissance de l'âme*, ii. 469 (épilogue).

danger will return in a heightened degree. Possibly in xvi. 10 the poet who speaks there may partly mean deliverance from danger, but not here. The problem of human fortunes is set forth here in such a way as excludes even a partial reference to this. That 'wise men die' (v. 11), is true of religious as well as secular-minded sages. We must compare lxxiii. 24. The 'taking' is really 'receiving with honour'—a 'taking home' (as Keble finely renders). Perhaps indeed there is an allusion to that fuller passage. The poet has that religious intuition which forms the kernel of the hope of immortality. Was his language suggested by some popular belief? It is an open question.¹ [We may, however, equally well render, 'when it (viz. Sheól) takes me away;' comp. Ezek. xxxiii. 4. So Ewald and Hitzig. The rendering adopted conduces more to rhythm.]

17-21 The poet resumes the didactic tone. Like a fellow-psalmist (see lxxiii.), he cannot remain on the heights of mystic devotion. The person addressed is a scholar of the

wise men (see on xxxvii. 1). He is not to be afraid lest the power which wealth gives should be turned to evil purposes. How short is the time for its enjoyment! The tone of this epilogue is calmer (contrast v. 18 with Isa. v. 14). The poet no longer distinguishes degrees of badness and of punishment. Earthly wealth is a disqualification for that high honour referred to in v. 16 (as explained above). Note the significant phrase **in his life**. The rich man has had 'his portion in life,' and (v. 20 b; comp. xxxvi. 9) there is no other 'light' for him to see. He has 'blessed his soul,' like the rich man in Luke xii. 19 (comp. Deut. xxix. 18), but for what? His fathers, where are they? To them shall he be gathered in the dark land. (Observe that 'going to his fathers' is distinguished from death and burial; see Gen. xxv. 8, xxxv. 29, 2 Kings xxii. 20. The received text has, 'thou shalt go'—a scribe's error, caused by the use of the second person in the preceding line.)

PSALM L.

JEHOVAH judges His people in the presence of 'heaven and earth;' He sets forth His character and the worship which He requires. We find here the same purified conception of true religion as in xl. 7 and in the great pre-Exile prophets. The divisions are well marked.

- 1 El Elohim Yahveh has spoken,
and called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going
down thereof.
- 2 Out of Zion the perfection of beauty
God has shone forth.
- 3 Our God will come, and may not keep silence :
fire devours before him,
and around him it is very tempestuous.
- 4 He calls to the heavens above,
and to the earth, that he may judge his people.

¹ It is proper to speak with reserve on such a subject. But certainly we can best account, psychologically, for the revelation of the indestructible higher life, if the soil was prepared by a popular belief in at least the bare possibility of escaping 'from the hand of Sheól' (see above, p. 41, and cf. 1 Sam. ii. 9). The revelation will then consist in the extension of this escape to a much larger number of persons, and in making it depend on the attainment of a certain character.

- 5 'Gather my duteous loving ones unto me,
those that have made a covenant with me with sacrifice.
- 6 And the heavens declare his righteousness,
for God is about to judge.
- 7 Hear, O my people, and I will speak,
O Israel, and I will protest unto thee ;
Yahveh thy God, am I.
- 8 Not for thy sacrifices will I reprove thee,
(truly, thy burnt offerings are continually before me ;
- 9 I will take no bullock out of thy house,
nor he-goats out of thy folds ;
- 10 For mine is every beast of the forest,
the cattle upon the mountains of God.
- 11 I know all the birds of the mountains,
and the roamers of the plain are in my mind.
- 12 If I were hungry, I would not tell thee,
for mine is the world and the fulness thereof.
- 13 Would I eat bulls' flesh,
or drink the blood of goats ?
- 14 Sacrifice unto God thanksgiving,
and (so) pay thy vows unto the most High ;
- 15 And call upon me in the day of trouble,
I will rescue thee, and thou shalt glorify me.
- 16 But unto the ungodly saith God,
What right hast thou to rehearse my statutes,
or to take my covenant into thy mouth ?
- 17 Whereas thou hatest correction,
and castest my words behind thee.
- 18 When thou seest a thief, thou hast pleasure in him,
and with adulterers is thy portion.
- 19 Thou hast let thy mouth loose for evil,
and thy tongue contrives deceit.
- 20 Thou sittest and speakest against thy brother ;
thou givest a push to thine own mother's son.
- 21 These things hast thou done, and I kept silence ;
thou imaginedst that I was even like thyself ;
I will reprove thee, and order the facts before thee.
- 22 O consider this, ye that forget God,
lest I tear in pieces, and there be none to deliver.
- 23 Whoso sacrifices thanksgiving, glorifies me,
and to him that is blameless in his walk will I show the salva-
tion of God.

1-6 The appearance of the divine Judge; the summons to the witnesses and to the defendants. Who is it, whose voice peals forth? A king of many titles, three of which are given, to impress the fullness of the Divine Being. This triple name, in which it were too painful to write 'Jehovah,' occurs again only in Josh. xxii. 22, but the principle is the same as in 'Yahveh [Jehovah] Elohim' in lxxii. 18, Gen. ii., iii., &c. El is put first, because in the primitive Semitic world, to apply Dante's words, 'El s'appellava in terra il sommo Bene' (*Parad.* xxvi. 135). Whatever its origin,¹ a connexion with the idea of 'strength' must have suggested itself to Israelitish writers, just as, whatever the origin of Yahveh, the ideas of self-existence and self-manifestation must have inseparably cohered with that name to reflective worshippers. El is the most general, Yahveh the most special name for the Divine Being (see on cxviii. 27). Elohim does not at once suggest a significant Hebrew etymology; but considering the idiomatic use of this plural noun with a singular verb (as if a collective²) we may perhaps paraphrase it, 'the many in one.' 'He in whom all that man has ever conceived of strength, wisdom, goodness, &c., is summed up and exceeded.' From the use made of Ps. l. 1 in a Talmudic treatise, it would seem that early Jewish Christians quoted it to prove the doctrine of the Trinity. The answer of the Rabbi to the objector (*Berakhoth*, c. 9) was, that these three expressions are the attributes of a single person, as we say indifferently, Cæsar, Augustus, or Emperor. A good answer. Each has a different meaning, and brings out one side of the Old Testament conception of God. Duport's rendering (1674) is a praiseworthy attempt, Ἀθάυτος

φώνησε Θεὸς μακάρεσσιν ἀνάσσων. — **And called the earth.** Not to be judged, but to witness the judgment of the covenant-people (*v.* 5).

2 **The perfection of beauty.** As Lam. ii. 15 (comp. 1 Macc. ii. 12). For the idea, see on xlvi. 3.

3 **Will come,** as a judge. This is the object of the bright radiance (*v.* 2). — **May not . . .** because the occasion is so great. Literally, 'let him not . . .' It is the vehement protest of the emotional nature against a grievous evil. See xxxiv. 6, xli. 3, cxxi. 3, Isa. ii. 9. Comp. also the phrase common in Arabic elegies, *la tab'ad*, 'die not,' and the beginning of the 37th elegy in the *Hamāsa* (Freytag, p. 405), 'Let not God cause to die (*la yub'id*) our brothers who are deceased.'

5 The ministers of justice are to **gather God's duteous loving ones** (see on xii. 2), i.e. not, as in xii. 2, Israelites worthy of the name, but all those who are outwardly at least servants of Jehovah. (See further on *vv.* 16, 23.) There being no special indication of a Macca-bean date, I abstain from comparing 1 Macc. ii. 42, vii. 13, 2 Macc. xiv. 6 (where the Asidæans—'every one who offered himself freely for the law'—are the strict Jehovists who rallied round Judas the Maccabee). A mutual relation of 'lovingkindness' (*khēsed*) between Jehovah and His servants, arising out of the 'covenant' between them, entitles us to call either party by the title *khāsīdh*, *khāsīdhīm*. Jehovah is *khāsīdh* (cxlv. 17, Jer. iii. 12). Levi is *khāsīdh* (in connexion with a religious 'covenant,' Deut. xxxiii. 9); the whole people, and each of its righteous members, is *khāsīdh* (xvi. 10, l. 5, and nineteen other psalm-passages). The second half of *v.* 3 emphasises the connexion of the

¹ On this point, see Nöldeke, 'Ueber den Gottesnamen יהוה ,' in *Monatsberichte der Akademie d. W. zu Berlin*, 1880, p. 760, &c.; Friedrich Delitzsch, *Wo lag das Paradies?* 1881, p. 165; D. H. Müller's paper on יהוה and יהו among the Sabæans in the Proceedings of the 6th International Congress of Orientalists; Lagarde, *Mittheilungen*, 1884, p. 94, &c.

² The Ethiopic *amlāk* 'God' is a pure collective form.

ideas of 'covenant' and lovingkindness, with the addition—somewhat strange in the light of *vv.* 14, 23—of the words **with sacrifice**. It is not enough to explain these words by a reference to Ex. xxiv. 5. Clearly they are ironical (comp. Isa. xlii. 19). Jehovah, who at the outset permitted the great covenant of blood, still tolerates the sacrifices by which the covenant is continually renewed.¹ Sacrifice is a form of devotional expression, but how childish a form! 'Ye have been very zealous;' He seems to say, 'about something which I enjoined not (Jer. vii. 22, Isa. xliii. 23; cf. lxvi. 3); but ye have not been equally careful about that which I did enjoin.'

6 The heavens **declare His righteousness**. Why? Because Jehovah stands in a quasi-legal relation to Israel, and before He can judge, a witness must guarantee His perfect righteousness.

7-15 The continuation of this dramatic scene scarcely answers to the commencement. The judgment seems to be adjourned, or it is left to the conscience of the defendants (Jehovah is both plaintiff and judge). The speech which follows is an exposition of the claims of Jehovah, which is substantially equivalent to the first table of the Decalogue, and which, like the Decalogue (Ex. xx. 2), begins with the solemn assertion, **Jehovah thy God am I**. Comp. lxxxi. 11, and (for the reading) see on xlv. 8. The greater part of this passage is strongly ironical. Instead of bringing definite charges against the people, Jehovah states what the subject of reproof is not, viz. the due performance of sacrificial rites. Much has been said by commentators on this and similar passages (e.g. Hos. vi. 6, Isa. i. 11-13, Mic. vi. 6, 7, Jer. vii. 22) on the

relation of the higher teachers of Israel to animal sacrifices. It seems to me certain that neither the prophets nor the wise men (see Prov. xxi. 3) regarded these as ideally good. The spiritual meaning of the sacrificial system cannot have been recognised by them. Probably they considered it a means of keeping up the religious sentiment adapted only to less noble spirits. The psalmist, at any rate, as it seems to me, not only with the greatest emphasis denies that God (as some undeveloped minds imagine²) requires nourishment, but reveals a sympathetic interest in the animal creation (cf. Ps. ciii.), which is hardly consistent with a cordial endorsement of the principle of animal sacrifice. I speak with hesitation, but my phrase 'hardly consistent' may be defended by the obvious indifference of the wise men as a class (except Sirach) to the sacrificial system. The speech concludes with a restatement of Jehovah's ancient promise of protection together with its conditions. Thus far the divine speaker has confined Himself to these formal but not openly ungodly worshippers who formed (perhaps) the larger part of Israel.

10 **Upon the mountains of God** (xxxvi. 7). Although God Himself is speaking, the phrase is not from a Hebrew point of view objectionable (see *vv.* 14, 23). The received text is perplexing. The easiest rendering is, perhaps, 'upon the mountains where thousands are' (so Hupfeld); or, by altering one point, we might render the text, 'upon my mountains by thousands' (Bredenkamp). The Sept. may seem to have read differently; it renders the line, κτήνη ἐν τοῖς ὄρεσι καὶ βόες (comp. viii. 8, Heb.) But every view both of text and of

¹ So Jeremiah (in spite of the strong words in Jer. vii. 22) concedes the practice of sacrifice in Jer. xvii. 26, xxxi. 14, xxxiii. 11, though not its divine origin (see the exposition of Jer. vii. 22 in the *Pulpit Commentary*).

² This gross theory, repudiated by our psalmist, survives in the phraseology of Leviticus (iii. 11, xxi. 8, 17, 21). Expressions like the 'food of Jehovah' can only have been derived from consecrated traditional formulæ. The compiler or compilers of Leviticus had a different view of sacrifice from our psalmist (see end of note on *vv.* 16-21), but are not to be held responsible for the invention of such phrases.

construction seems awkward but that suggested by Olshausen and adopted above.

11 **The roamers of the plain** (viz. either 'that which moves to and fro,' or 'that which comes forth abundantly'). So in another Asaph-psalm (lxxx. 14).

14 Thanksgiving and the performance of vows, the (only) true sacrifice (so xl. 7, 10, li. 17, 18, and perhaps lxix. 31, 32). The expressions are synonymous; see xxii. 26, lxi. 9. 'Vowing' has become spiritualised; comp. Hos. xiv. 2.¹

16-21 Israel's judge, who has (it would seem) severed the imperfectly good from the bad, now addresses Himself to the latter. This time the subject of reproof is specified—viz. the neglect of the simplest moral duties. In short, the second table of the Decalogue is virtually expounded. Observe that the class now addressed is not composed of paganisers; it is as familiar with the 'covenant' as the former class. I mean that the reference to the covenant links the 'ungodly' who are addressed here to the formal but (as it would seem) not ungodly worshippers who are indirectly and with gentle irony reproved in *vv.* 7-13. But besides the 'covenant' we find that in this verse the 'statutes' of Jehovah are spoken of. Bredenkamp thinks that from the whole tenor of the psalm these 'statutes' must include ordinances respecting ritual, and consequently denies that the first part of Jehovah's address can possibly mean to disparage sacrifice in itself. The answer is that the psalmist, like Jeremiah, draws a distinction between more and less important 'statutes.' There is much in Deuteronomy (which substantially, I suppose, represents the 'covenant' here referred to) which is simply adopted from current sacerdotal tradition; there is much also which proceeded from a direct revelation, whether to 'Moses' of old or to his late prophetic successor. The two

tables, called the 'tables of the covenant,' are what the psalmist is especially thinking of. These, and the prophetic enforcements of these in Deuteronomy and Jeremiah, are the 'words' which the 'ungodly' is accused of 'casting behind him,' instead of keeping them in his heart (xl. 9, Deut. vi. 6). According to this compendium of the covenant, there is but one indispensable religious form, the observance of the Sabbath; sacrifices are omitted, as belonging to purely natural religion and supremely unimportant from the point of view of the searcher of hearts (Jer. xvii. 10). Of course, the formalists, both the moderately good and the openly bad, gave a different interpretation to the 'statutes' and the 'covenant.' This seems to be ironically alluded to by the divine speaker, who is however far from endorsing it. By the phrases, **my statutes** and **my covenant**, then, I understand that part of the Law which the ungodly man regarded as in a special sense divine appointments, and by **my words** those 'weightier matters' which he spoke of but little and practised still less. The expressions are not synonymous, but antithetical. This is confirmed by the use of the term **correction** (*v.* 17 *a*), which clearly expresses the aim and object of the divine **words** (*v.* 17 *b*). The true 'statutes' of Jehovah are those upon which both public and private morality depend; they of course include the fear of God, but prescribe no fixed form of worship. The authors of the Levitical legislation of course thought otherwise; they must have written subsequently to our psalmist in a different set of providential circumstances.

18-20 Transgressions of the seventh, sixth, and eighth commandments. The 'brother' in *v.* 20 is any fellow-Israelite (for 'mother,' comp. Isa. 1. 1). To 'push' or 'overthrow' is to oppress in the forms of justice.

¹ Against this view, however, see Bredenkamp, *Gesetz und Propheten* (1881), p. 64.

23 *b* For the received text, see R.V. (text and margin; the latter follows Del.) It may be rendered literally, 'whoso lays down a way,' but does this fit the context? See crit. note. The 'salvation' spoken of is no small temporary victory (as

xx. 7), but rather (note the Hebrew idiom, more fully rendered at xci. 16) some grand interposition of Jehovah, placing His people in a state of perfect happiness (comp. on Isa. xii. 2). It is a greater promise than *v.* 15.

PSALM LI.

DEVOTION has its own canons of exegesis. But reverence for historical truth, which is equivalent to reverence for the ways of God, bids us enquire into the original meaning of this most sacred lyric. First of all, however, we must ask, Do the two closing verses belong strictly to the psalm, or are they a later addition? Upon the answer depends in no slight degree our view of the meaning of the psalm. Assuming the former alternative, the psalmist holds a different theory of sacrifice from the writer of Ps. l. Sacrifices fell through during the Exile, but as soon as Jerusalem was rebuilt, legally correct offerings would again be brought to the temple. I cannot help referring to the beautiful Jewish service for the Day of Atonement. This liturgy expresses the feelings of pious Jews during their second great Exile, and it does so in language borrowed from Ps. li.—'O rebuild (the temple) speedily, and then will we prepare the offerings enjoined upon us.' Meantime, how is God to be propitiated? The answer is that repentance (*'shūbāh*) is tantamount to burnt-offerings. 'There would be no end,' it adds, to the burnt offerings for our debts, and no number to the sweet savours for our guilt.' In the same spirit the Unity Hymn quotes Ps. l. 8 and Jer. vii. 22, and adds these lovely lines: 'I will build thee an altar with my broken heart, and will also break my spirit within me. The shreds (lit., breakings) of my spirit are thy sacrifices; may they come up acceptably on thine altar.'

The interpretation of the psalm adopted in this liturgy is precisely that advocated by Dr. Robertson Smith in his first volume of lectures.¹ It is at first sight commended by the connexion of thought which early readers must surely have found between *vv.* 18, 19 and *vv.* 20, 21. That connexion is subtle and beautiful; too subtle as I think for the author of this psalm, who would have expressed his idea more plainly, but not too subtle, nor too beautiful, for those editors of the religious classics of Israel who, as I have said before, had some at least of the qualities and the gifts of their more inspired predecessors.²

Assuming the latter alternative, we find a beautiful progress in the three kindred psalms—xl., l., and li. The first merely says, Obedience is better than sacrifice; the second adds that prayer and thanksgiving are essential to true worship; the third, that, since Israel and each Israelite are sinners, they must be forgiven before they can obey or praise, and that God will forgive them, not for sacrifices, but for heartfelt repentance. Perfect obedience is impossible; but, as a Jewish doctor expresses it, 'that which God declares to be a defect in an animal sacrifice, He accounts an advantage in the heart-sacrifice of a man.'³

The view which has been indicated above seems to have been anticipated by Theodore of Mopsuestia, who is thus epitomised by Bar Hebræus:⁴ '(This psalm was) spoken with reference to the people in Babylon, which

¹ *The Old Testament in the Jewish Church*, p. 416.

² *The Prophecies of Isaiah*, ed. 3, pp. 228, 229.

³ So Holdheim (*Predigten*, i. 86) paraphrases a sentence in *Wayikra rabba*, c. 7.

⁴ See Baethgen in *Stade's Zeitschrift*, 1885, p. 95.

confesses its sins, and prays forgiveness and the cessation of its exile.' He weakens the sense of *v. 6 a*, however, by explaining, 'against thee alone, and not against the Babylonians.' The affinity of the poem to the Second Isaiah cannot be overlooked.

- 3 Have pity upon me, Elohim, according to thy lovingkindness :
according to thy plenteous compassions wipe out mine offences.
- 4 Wash me thoroughly and oft from mine iniquity,
and cleanse me from my sin.
- 5 For I myself acknowledge my transgressions,
and my sin is continually before me.
- 6 Against thee, thee only, have I sinned,
and done that which is evil in thine eyes,
that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest,
and be clear what time thou judgest.
- 7 Behold, in iniquity was I brought forth,
and in sin did my mother conceive me.
- 8 Behold, thou desirest truth in the dark places,
therefore in the secret place make me to know wisdom.
- 9 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean ;
wash me thoroughly, and I shall be whiter than snow.
- 10 Fill me with mirth and gladness,
that the bones thou hast crushed may thrill with joy.
- 11 Hide thy face from my sins,
and wipe out all mine iniquities.
- 12 Create me a clean heart, O God,
and renew within me a stedfast spirit.
- 13 Cast me not away from thy presence,
and take not thy holy spirit from me.
- 14 Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation,
and uphold me with a willing spirit.
- 15 Then will I teach transgressors thy ways,
and sinners shall turn back unto thee.
- 16 Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, Jehovah, my saviour-God,
and my tongue shall ring out thy righteousness.
- 17 O Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth shall publish thy praise.
- 18 For thou hast no pleasure in sacrifices, that I should present
them,
burnt offerings [and whole burnt offerings] thou favourest not.
- 19 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit,
a broken and a crushed heart, O God, thou canst not despise.
- 20 Do good in thy favour unto Zion ;
build thou the walls of Jerusalem.

21 Then wilt thou be pleased with the right sacrifices, burnt offering
and whole burnt offering ;
then will they offer bullocks upon thine altar.

3 The first plea for pardon—God's lovingkindness (implying the existence of a 'covenant'); comp. xxv. 6.

4 **Wash me thoroughly** (so *v.* 9), like a fuller, *πλύνων* (Sept.), not *νίψων* (Duport).

5 The second—the sinner's sincere confession. Comp. xxxii. 5, and, for the form of expression in *b.*, xxxviii. 18, xlv. 16.

6 The third—God permitted, or even caused transgressions. 'Against thee, thee only' is not said to enhance the gravity of the sin, but to enforce a humble appeal for mercy. God made that holy law which Israel has broken; He placed Israel in circumstances too difficult for him. Therefore, **against thee, thee only, have I sinned, that thou mightest be justified, &c.** (Not, in this context, to be weakened into 'so that thou art,' &c.) Clearly Israel is suffering under God's judgment, and in his physical and mental agony he cannot choose his words. Another spokesman of the Jewish Church used equal freedom of speech—'Why hast thou hardened our heart so as not to fear thee?' (Isa. lxiii. 17). But this free language involves a plea for pardon with both speakers. 'It is thine own doing at least in part. Our freedom has been imperfect; we have been tethered by divine predestination.¹ We have not been able to resist the stream of circumstance. We have done wrong; thou art sure to be just in thy sentence. But since thou art partly the cause of our wrong-doing, deal gently with us.' The speaker is clearly Israel personified, or one who feels himself entirely united to his people in guilt and punishment. No other speaker could say, 'Against thee, thee only.' [Comp. Rom. iii. 5. The supposed objector

there assumes that God is unjust in punishing. The psalmist would urge, not that God has been unjust in punishing, but that He would be not just, i.e. not Jehovah, if He did not 'in the midst of wrath remember mercy.']—**Be clear**, viz. in the eyes of the world. Sept., *νικήσης* (*ἐν τῷ κρίνεσθαί σε*), giving the verb an Aramaising sense. The radical idea of a clear bright light may in fact equally well develop into that of glory or of victory (comp. *νέζακή*, 1 Sam. xv. 29)

7 The fourth—man's natural liability to sin. Yes; it is again a plea for pardon that we have before us, and Calvin errs in declaring that this view of the passage makes the psalmist into a hypocrite, who seeks to evade a just judgment by minimising his guilt. Nowhere does the speaker extenuate his faults; but nowhere does he think of his God as other than a kindly and considerate judge ('judge' indeed is a poor makeshift word to describe the relation of the covenant-God to his offending but repentant people). In his horror at the idea of 'extenuation,' Calvin rushes to the other extreme, and speaks of 'amplification'—'quin potius ad amplificandam malorum suorum gravitatem a peccato or ginali ducit exordium . . . illustre testimonium de peccato originali, quo Adam totum humanum genus implicuit.' Not so; the O.T. contains no theory whatever on the origin of sin. Gen. iii. simply relates a fact; at any rate, it stands by itself, and is nowhere referred to again in the O.T. (Hos. vi. 7, Isa. xliii. 27, Job xxxi. 33 are not proofs to the contrary). All that the speaker means (and is not that a sad confession enough?) is that he belongs to an erring race and drew his first breath in sin. So far as he is an individual, he re-

¹ Later Jewish theology recognises the coexistence of predestination and free-will. R. Akiba said, 'Everything is foreseen, and free-will is granted' (*Pirke Aboth*, iii. 15).

calls the fact that his own mother, and that mother's mother, sinned ;¹ so far as he represents the nation, that Israel from the first was prone to infidelity (see Isa. xlvi. 8). Upon the latter view, the 'mother' is an altogether ideal person (as we speak of our 'mother-country'), and to be explained as in xxii. 10, 11, l. 20, lxxi. 6, Isa. l. 1 ; this indeed is chiefly in the speaker's mind, so that the passage is virtually equivalent to xxv. 7. I say, 'virtually,' because what is there ascribed to Israel, is here predicated of the contemporary Israel's 'mother,' i.e. of the nationality. [There is a noteworthy discussion of this passage in J. Müller's classic work, *The Christian Doctrine of Sin*, ii. 274-5. He says that it may be understood either 'as affirming that the mother, in conceiving and bearing children, is tainted with iniquity and sin ; or that man, from the beginning of his existence, from conception onwards, is in a state of sin and iniquity.' The former view, he says, contradicts the moral teaching of the O.T., especially the divine ordinance of marriage in Gen. i. 28. He thinks that it weakens the passage to assimilate it to xxii. 10, 11, lviii. 3, lxxi. 6 ; but it is rather he who weakens these passages by his inadequate explanation of them as 'proverbial or figurative.' Comp. also Ewald (*Die Lehre der Bibel von Gott*, iii. 147, note 4), who however misses the national reference of the psalm, though the 'Second Isaiah' repeatedly speaks of the persistent sinfulness of Israel from the first, Isa. xliii. 27, xlvi. 8, lvii. 3.]

8 The fifth—God's own pleasure in true inward religion. This verse is in antithesis to the foregoing. Two things are too obvious to be contradicted—that human nature is deeply ingrained with sin, and that God would have it as deeply penetrated with 'truth' or 'stability.' This comprehensive word means here not merely a true recognition of our sinfulness (Tholuck), but a stable, truthful character, one rooted in the

fear of God and moulded by His indwelling law (xl. 9), which is 'truth' (cxix. 142), in contrast to that of the ungodly, who are 'like the troubled sea,' and false to the only standard of right. The controlling principle of such a character is called 'wisdom,' i.e. the fear of God (cxl. 10 ; comp. xc. 11, 12). In the latter part of the verse the psalmist passes again into the language of prayer (the imperfect is an optative), but he expressly bases his petition on God's known desire for true inward religion.

9, 10 First, purification ; then a joy with no undertone of sadness.

V. 10 reflects its sweetness on v. 9: '*Asperges me si dolcemente udissi,*' &c. (Dante, *Purg.* xxxi. 98).—

With hyssop. Which plant, or plants, may be designated by *'ezôbh* (which, received from the Phœnicians, became *ὑσσώπος*) need not here be decided. The allusion is, not to the plant as such, but to the legal rite of purification (Lev. xiv., Num. xix.)—**Wash me,** &c. Sin is too deeply ingrained for the sinner himself to efface it ; God Himself must do this wonder (see also on v. 4). For the phraseology comp. Job ix. 30, and still more Isa. i. 18, where there is also a certain *incomplete* parallelism of sense (see my note, *ad loc.*) Observe, the psalmist presupposes the deepened intuitions of Jeremiah (see Jer. ii. 22, xiii. 23).—**Fill me with mirth.** The text has, 'Make me to hear of mirth,' i.e. 'send me a message of glad tidings.' But the form of expression is too strange ; Pesh. has preserved the original reading (see crit. note).—**The bones which thou hast crushed.** The 'bones' represent the whole nature of man (see on vi. 2) ; 'crushed' points on to v. 19, and reminds us also of xxxviii. 9, xlv. 20.

11 It is not enough that to earthly eyes he may be whiter than the driven snow. His sins must be as though they had not been for God Himself.—**Hide thy face,** &c., viz. that Thou mayest not see my

¹ He does not make any such abstract statement as that in Job xiv. 4.

sins (comp. xc. 8). Riehm, on the ground of Hebrew usage, explains differently—that my sins personified may not see Thee and accuse me before Thee.¹ In either case, forgiveness is referred to a free act of divine grace; but the former seems the more natural interpretation.

12 'Thou art a God that doest wonders. Therefore do more than forgive, do more than cleanse; make me a new as well as a clean heart, as the central organ of my moral and religious life' (see on cii. 19 and comp. Ezek. xi. 19, xxxvi. 26, Jer. xxiv. 7). Observe that 'heart' and 'spirit' are parallel, both here and in *v.* 19; so too lxxviii. 8 (comp. 37), where, by the way, the equivalence of the ideas of the words rendered respectively 'truth' (*v.* 8) and 'stedfast' (in this verse) is apparent. 'Heart,' like 'soul,' emphasises the individual side of a man's life; 'spirit,' its divine or at least preternatural side. 'Stedfastness' is a quality which is equally manifested in obedience (lxxviii. 37 *b*; comp. l. 16 *b*) and in trustfulness towards God (cxii. 7 *b*).

13 He asked in *v.* 12 for purity of heart; he now completes the petition (xi. 7, Matt. v. 8). That gift would be precious, as bringing him near to God, whereas exclusion from God's presence would prove that the gift was denied. But how could such a gift and such a station be preserved? Only by the spirit of Jehovah's holiness. The 'spirit' is here evidently more than a mere influence; it is an undefinable something which represents or makes effectual the presence of God. So in Isa. lxiii. 9, 10 the 'angel of God's face' (or, presence) is parallel to 'the spirit of his holiness.' But why is the special epithet 'holy' added to 'spirit'? Jehovah is holy in two senses, as separate from creaturely weakness and impurity, and as devotedly attached to Israel. This double meaning explains Hos. xi. 9, 'the Holy One in the midst of thee,' which says more than 'Israel's Holy One.' But the latter

sense predominates in the phrase 'holy spirit' in Isa. lxiii. 10, 11 (see my notes), and this determines the primary meaning here. The psalmist's petition relates in the first instance to the confirmation to Israel of the gift of Jehovah's felt presence. And yet the context shows that it includes a prayer for the assimilation of Israel and of each good Israelite to Jehovah. Observe that *v.* 12 refers more prominently to the individual Israelite; *v.* 13 to the Israelites collectively. In the former we hear of a (divinely renewed) human spirit; in the latter, of the (humanly tabernacled) divine spirit. In the former, the psalmist asks for a new gift; in the latter for the confirmation of an old one.

14 **Salvation** (*yeshua'*) has not quite the same full significance as in l. 23; but here too outward blessings are at any rate included. Sin is attended by chastisement; forgiveness by an equally visible deliverance. So it is with the individual; so also with the nation. The psalmist, even if referring to his own sins and chastisements, regards them as shared by every other Israelite. The burden of guilt removed, he (and such as he) can obey the divinely given impulse, walking in the ways of God.—**A willing spirit**, or, a spirit of willingness, of spontaneous motion towards goodness—'the princely heart of innocence' (Keble).

15 Personal experience, the text of a sermon addressed not to believers (as xxii. 23, xxxii. 6, 8), but to sinners. The speaker is one of those who 'turn many to righteousness' (Dan. xii. 3), and is not necessarily a prophet.

16 The Hebrew writers are wont to specify some typical sin or sins, where we should rather employ a generic term. Thus, 'your hands are full of bloodshed'; 'they build up Zion with bloodshed'; 'for his unjust gain I smote him' (Isa. i. 15, Mic. iii. 10, Isa. lvii. 17; see notes). Another peculiarity of theirs is to speak of sins, when they mean

¹ *Der Begriff der Sühne im A. T.*, p. 8, n. 2.

rather the punishments of sins (see, e.g., xxxviii. 5). So that the petition, 'Deliver me from bloodshed' (so literally), means, 'Deliver me from the punishment of those heinous sins (such as murder) which led Israel captive in the past' (comp. cxxx. 8). This accounts for the reference which follows to God's 'righteousness.' Jehovah is equally 'righteous' when he sends and when he removes chastisements.

18, 19 Why express thanks in words? Because God cares for no other sacrifice but a **broken spirit**, i.e. the expression of sincere penitence (see introduction). Comp.

xxxiv. 19, Isa. lvii. 15 *b*, where, however, there is no clear reference to sorrow for sin.—A **crushed heart** points back to *v.* 10.

20, 21 The theme changes. Spiritual duties and blessings give place to Jerusalem and the temple, the disciple of the Second Isaiah to the earnest fellow-worker of Ezra and Nehemiah. The community has to be built up; it needs walls and a systematised ritual. Without these Jerusalem is but a wailing-place. As a historical fact, the restored exiles obtained both together.—**The right sacrifices**; see on *iv.* 6.

PSALM LII.

ADDRESSED to some high official who misused his power, and is threatened somewhat as Isaiah threatened Shebna (see on *vv.* 7, 9). Note the wonderful change of key in *vv.* 10, 11. The speaker is probably Israel (see on *v.* 10).

- 3 Why gloriest thou in mischief, thou tyrant?
the divine lovingkindness endures perpetually.
- 4 Thy tongue devises engulfing ruin,
like a whetted razor, O thou that workest guile.
- 5 Thou lovest evil more than good;
lying rather than to speak righteousness.
- 6 Thou lovest all devouring words,
[the devices of] a deceitful tongue.
- 7 God in return shall pull thee down for ever,
grasp thee, and pluck thee out of thy tent,
and uproot thee from the land of the living.
- 8 The righteous shall see it, and fear,
and shall laugh at him:
- 9 'Lo, there is the man that made not God his asylum,
but trusted in his great wealth, and felt strong in his substance.'
- 10 But I am like a flourishing olive-tree in the house of God;
I trust in the lovingkindness of God for ever and ever.
- 11 I will give thanks unto thee for ever, for thou hast done nobly,
and declare before thy loving ones that thy name is good.

3 **Thou tyrant.** Lit., 'thou mighty man;' but the word *gibbôr* connotes the idea of tyranny (or, more widely still, as Schultens says, arrogance towards both God and man). *Gibbôrîm* occurs in the de-

scription of the antediluvian *nefilîm* ('destructive ones'?) in Gen. vi. 4, and *gibbôr* in the notice respecting Nimrod in Gen. x. 8. As Dillmann says (note on Gen. vi. 4), 'Wo Kraftmenschen ihr Wesen treiben,

kann es ohne Verletzung von Recht und Ordnung nicht abgehen.' The Arabic *jabbār* has the same full meaning; comp. *Korán*, Sur. xi. 62, where Palmer renders '(the Adites) followed the bidding of every headstrong tyrant.' Grätz quite unnecessarily emends *haggibbōr* into *haggēbher* (see *v.* 9).

4 Note how violent words are taken as specimens of malignant hostility. **Thy tongue devises** (comp. on xxxv. 28, &c.), the speech of the 'tyrant' being the embodiment of the imaginations of the heart.—**Engulfing ruin** (comp. lv. 12). 'Plans of destruction' (De Witt) is not strong enough; the utterances of this evil tongue are 'words of swallowing up' (*v.* 6, literally rendered; cf. on xxxv. 25), which of itself suggests a lingering consciousness of the root-meaning of *havvōth* (see on *v.* 10).

6 **A deceitful tongue.** Or, 'O deceitful tongue' (comp. note on the parallel phrase, cxx. 3). This is certainly better than to make 'a deceitful tongue' the second object of the verb 'thou lovest' (as Sept.); the phrase is not strong enough to stand thus. But prefix a noun in the construct state, and the case is altered. The parallelism gains.

7 Comp. Isaiah's threat, Isa. xxii. 17, 18.—**Out of thy tent.** So Job xviii. 14. Tent = dwelling (see on cxxxii. 3); but there may be an allusion to the nomadic character (may we say?) of human life in general. In Isa. xxxviii. 12 the image of the 'tent' is applied differently.—**Uproot thee from,** &c. Comp. the picture of the wicked tyrant in xxxvii. 35, 36, and note the fine contrast below, *v.* 10. See also xxvii. 13.

8 **Shall see it,** &c. The key-note is in the second verb, which expresses reverence for the law of the Divine government (comp. lviii. 12).

9 **There is the man.** Heb. *haggēbher*, not *haggibbōr*; the former is a word descriptive of age, the latter of an exceptional gift. The speech quoted seems to have

a touch of sarcasm. The 'righteous' cannot use the word *haggibbōr*, for this would be to recognise the position usurped by the bad man; in preference to 'ish or 'ādām, they select *gēbher* (properly 'a grown-up man,' 'a man in his full strength'), because it suggests the claim which they contemptuously disallow. Comp. 'Gird up thy loins like a man' (*k'gēbher*, 'like a man who thinks himself strong'), in Jehovah's address to Job (Job xxxviii. 3), and 'Jehovah will hurl thee, O man' (*gēbher*, 'thou who thinkest thyself strong'), in the prophecy against Shebna (Isa. xxii. 18).—**But trusted,** &c. Comp. xlix. 7.—**In his substance** (see crit. note). The text-reading, however interpreted, does not suit the parallelism. The word (*havvāh*) having but two actual meanings, (1) passionate desire (Prov. x. 3, xi. 6, Mic. vii. 3), (2) ruin, calamity (Job vi. 2, xxx. 13); comp. the usage of the plural *havvōth* (see above on *v.* 4).

10, 11 Who is the speaker—an individual, or the nation? Comparing xcii. 13 (which forms part of a strikingly parallel passage) we might say, Any and every righteous member of the nation. But in xcii. 10 the speaker must be Israel, and here too this is not improbably the case. See the other parallel passage, Jer. xi. 16, where Israel is compared to 'a flourishing olive-tree, fair, and of goodly fruit' (comp. Rom. xi. 24).—**Like a flourishing olive-tree.** The epithet is often rendered 'fresh-green.' 'Green' is no doubt a vague word in ancient languages (comp. Pliny's *cælum viride*, 'H.N.' xvii. 10, 14). But *ra'anān* is not properly a word of colour (see on xcii. 14); 'fresh green' would be scarcely accurate. Tristram speaks of the 'pale-blue foliage' of the olive (*Nat. Hist. of the Bible*, p. 374).—**In the house of God.** In the parallel line we have 'in the lovingkindness of God.' Now, as another psalmist reminds us, 'the earth is full of the lovingkindness of Jehovah' (xxxiii. 5). Clearly the tie of a mutual

love based on the covenant' must make, not merely the temple of Jerusalem and the land of Israel, but the whole earth 'the house of God and the gate of heaven' (see on xxiii. 6). I cannot persuade myself then that the psalmist alludes here to olive-trees actually planted in the precincts of the temple (comp. xcii. 14). It is true that magnificent cypresses and a few olive and lemon trees may be seen at this day in the area of the

Haram. But to infer from lxxxiv. 4, Zech. i. 8, and 2 Macc. xiv. 4 that such trees existed in the sacred precincts in ancient times seems hazardous. On the first of these passages see below, and cf. Wright, *Zechariah* (1879), pp. 8, 530, and Grimm's note on 2 Macc. *l.c.*

11 **Thou hast done nobly.** Strictly, a future-perfect (cf. liv. 9, lvi. 14).—**Declare.** A necessary correction, for the senseless text-reading 'wait.'

PSALM LIII.

ANOTHER recension of Ps. xiv., with 'Elohim' for 'Yahveh' (Jehovah), and certain various readings which in *vv.* 2-5 are obviously wrong, but which Hitzig and Merx accept as correct in *v.* 6. This is the form in which this verse (cf. xiv. 5, 6) appears :

Thereupon did they shudder indeed, where no cause was,
for God scattered the bones of him that encamped against thee ;
thou didst put (them) to shame, for God had rejected them.

As Street long since remarked, the variations may be intentional, the psalm having been retouched to adapt it to a second great deliverance. But they may also be simply due to the ordinary causes of corruption.

PSALM LIV.

THE expressions in this psalm of supplication need illustration from the more definite ones in the psalms which follow.

- 3 Save me by thy name, Elohim,
and right me by thy strength.
- 4 O God, hear my prayer,
give ear to the words of my mouth.
- 5 For strangers are risen up against me,
and the violent seek my soul,
not setting God before their eyes.
- 6 Behold, God is my helper ;
the Lord is the great upholder of my soul.
- 7 Their evil shall return unto my foes :
do thou exterminate them in thy truthfulness.
- 8 I will sacrifice unto thee with a free will,
and give thanks unto thy name, Jehovah, because it is good.
- 9 For out of all trouble has he delivered me,
and mine eye has looked its fill upon my spying enemies.

5 Here, as in Isa. i. 7, critics are divided as to the meaning of **strangers**. Generally no doubt

zārīm is used of foreigners (e.g. Isa. xxv. 3, xxix. 5, Ezek. xxviii. 7), but so also is the parallel word

'*ārīcīm*. If there were an Israelite so deaf to the voice of the law (Lev. xix. 18) and of nature as to be an '*ārīcī*, for instances of which see perhaps xxxvii. 35, Jer. xv. 21, there was no reason why he should not also be called *zār*. There is a various reading here (MSS. and Targ.)—*zēdīm* 'proud ones,' but this is caused by lxxxvi. 14.—**Not setting God,** &c. Cf. xvi. 8.

6 **The great upholder of my soul.** Sept., ἀντιλήπτωρ τῆς ψυχῆς μου. To render, 'among them that uphold my soul,' would mislead. The sense is not that God is the support of the psalmist among many others, but that He is so in a supreme degree—that He sums up in Himself the qualities of a class, viz. the class of helpers (so cxviii. 7). Comp. Judg. xi. 35, 'Alas, my daughter, thou hast bowed me down; even thou art my greatest troubler' (A.V. 'thou art one of them that trouble me'). The construction is the *Beth essentia* (see on xxxv. 2).

7 **Their evil shall return,** &c. So the text, but the margin, 'He

shall requite their evil,' &c. With this reading the preposition is a little more natural. But need we for this desert the text?

8 **With a free will.** Or, as De Witt, 'with a gift of free-will' (similarly R.V., after Hengstenberg and Hupfeld). But the sacrificial reference of the context does not necessitate this rendering. In confirmation of this, see Num. xv. 3, where render, with Hupfeld himself, 'willingly,' not (as R.V., forcing a *Beth essentia*) 'as a freewill offering.'—**It is good,** viz. thy name (cf. on cxxxv. 3).

9 The poet looks forward, and treats the future as past (see on lii. 11a).—**Has he delivered me,** viz. either Jehovah or (what is virtually the same) the Name of Jehovah; see on Isa. xxx. 27, &c.—**Mine eye has looked,** &c. Comp. lix. 11, xcii. 12. The word rendered 'spying enemies' has a special force here. The psalmist had suffered from the piercing gaze of the scoffers, *δνειδισμοῖς τε καὶ θλίψει θεατριζόμενος* (Heb. x. 33). Cf. xxii. 18.

PSALM LV.

A PRAYER against ungodly enemies, especially against a treacherous friend. The psalm must be taken in connexion with Ps. lix., from which it would seem: that the enemies spoken of are partly heathen (see below, on v. 11). See also Ps. lvi., and comp. some phenomena of Pss. ix., x.

- 2 Give ear to my prayer, Elohim ;
And hide not thyself from my beseeching :
- 3 Attend unto me and answer me ;
I am distraught in my musing, and can but moan,
- 4 For the sound of [the revilings of] the enemy,
because of the cries of the ungodly :
for they are ever hurling wickedness at me,
and in wrath they persecute me.
- 5 My heart is sore pained within me,
and deadly terrors have fallen upon me.
- 6 Fearfulness and trembling penetrate into me,
and a horrible dread enfolds me.
- 7 Then I said, 'Oh that I had wings like a dove !
I would fly away and abide :

- 8 Truly, I would flit far away,
and lodge in the wilderness,
9 Would wait for him that is my deliverer
from storm-blast and from tempest.’
- 10 Confound, Jehovah ; divide their speech :
for I behold violence and strife in the city.
11 Day and night they make their rounds on the walls thereof ;
trouble and mischief are in the midst of it.
12 Engulfing ruin is in the midst thereof :
oppression and deceit depart not from its forum.
13 (For it is not an enemy who insults me—that I might well bear ;
nor is it my hater who hath been insolent towards me—
from him I might well hide myself.
14 But it is thou, a man mine equal,
mine associate and my familiar friend ;
15 Together we had sweet intimacy,
and walked to the house of God in the throng.)
- 16 Let Death guilefully swallow them up ; let them go down alive
into Sheól ;
for wickedness is in their dwelling,
[abominable outrages are] in their midst.
17 As for me, I will call upon Elohim ;
and Jehovah shall save me.
18 Evening, and morning, and at noon will I muse and make my
moan :
so shall he hear my voice.
19 He hath set free my soul in peace that they might not come nigh
me,
for in great numbers have they been against me.
20 God heareth [the cry of the afflicted],
yea, he that is enthroned of old answereth them.

(Here follows a misplaced portion of this or of another Psalm.)

* * * * *

- To whom there are no changes,
and who fear not Elohim.
21 He has laid his hands upon those at peace with him,
he has desecrated his covenant.
22 His mouth is smoother than butter,
but his heart is all war ;
his words are softer than oil,
and yet are they drawn swords.

- 23 Cast thy care upon Jehovah,
and he will support thee ;
he will not always appoint tottering for the righteous.
- 24 And thou, Elohim, shalt cast them down into the pit of the grave :
bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days,
But I—will trust in thee.

3 **I am distraught** (Heb. *'arid*). The psalmist feels inwardly as if driven hither and thither by a like violent impulse to that of an animal which has broken loose (comp. the cognate Arabic word, *rāda*).

4 The **ungodly** in this connexion are heathen men ; or, at least, these are primarily thought of (comp. on lix. 6).

7 At last his anguish condenses itself in words. He wishes, like Jeremiah, that he could leave his people, and lodge in the wilderness (Jer. xi. 2). This is not, as Petrarch and many others have taken it, an aspiration after heaven. It is rest upon earth which the persecuted psalmist longs for. He craves to live his life to God without let or hindrance, even though it be in the desert. But the writer of xi. 1 takes a higher position, remembering that he is 'continually with' Jehovah (lxiii. 23).—**Wings like a dove**. The psalmist speaks for Israel, who is sometimes symbolised by the dove, Heb. *yōnāh* (see lxxviii. 14). But he also alludes to the habits of the *wild doves* (comp. Cant. ii. 14, Jer. xlvi. 28, Ezek. vii. 16), which abound in rocky districts, especially in Lebanon. The Arab poet Abu Katifa makes a singularly contrasted use of the image of the dove. He represents himself among the pillared palaces of Damascus, 'on whose parapets the tame dove coos.' Like the psalmist, he longs for freedom, and the tame dove is the symbol of the too artificial life at which he chafes. (Rückert, *Hamāsa*, ii. 230, 'Anhang.') The Ethiopic version renders *yōnāh* by *regeb* (proprie 'avis pavidā,' Dillmann).

7^b-9 We seem to trace the fluctuating feelings of the speaker

(see *v.* 3^d) in his language. The verbal forms in *v.* 7^b express eager readiness ; the tone sinks in *v.* 8 (note the imperfects), and in *v.* 9 ardour revives in voluntatives. On text of *v.* 9, see crit. note.

8 **Flit**. Comp. 'He that oft-times flitteth,' 'Thou tellest my flittings,' Prov. xxvii. 8, Ps. lvi. 8 in the Bible of 1551.

10 Comforted by prayer, the psalmist can endure the sad sights and sounds which beset him ; he no longer craves to be taken away. He thinks of the builders of the Tower of Babel, and imprecates the fate of those builders on his enemies. This reference confirms the view (see introd.) that the most dangerous of the psalmist's enemies are foreigners.—**Confound, Jehovah; divideth their speech** (lit., their tongue). Note the allusion to the Jehovistic passages, Gen. x. 25, xi. 1-9. The meaning is, Produce dissension among mine adversaries. But the ground immediately afterwards given is not very clear. The **violence and strife** which the psalmist beholds are not characteristics of a design of heaven-storming arrogance like the Tower of Babel. It would be unsafe to dogmatise ; but possibly the description of the precarious situation of the psalmist and all good men in *vv.* 10^b-15 may stand in some such connexion as this with *v.* 10^a. The enemies of Jehovah's cause are partly foreigners (see on *v.* 19), partly Israelites. Wisdom to plan and strength to execute belong to the former, but these are materially aided by the violent and factious conduct of the latter. The former, being the most dangerous, are the first objects of the psalmist's imprecation. 'Confound' (their counsel),

he prays, 'for they will otherwise get the complete mastery of our ill-governed city.'

11 **Day and night**, &c. Comp. lix. 7 *b*, 15 *b*. It is not a siege or blockade which is described, and the persons spoken of are not foreign but native enemies—the men of 'violence and strife.' These are compared to watchmen on the walls; only, instead of keeping watch against the enemy, they 'watch for iniquity' (Isa. xxix. 20). This line is parallel to *v.* 12 *b*; the next line, to *v.* 12 *a*.—**Trouble and mischief**. The terms used here and in *v.* 12 *b* remind us of *x.* 7; the two psalms are partly parallel.

12 **Engulfing ruin**. Perhaps the city was still under the tyranny of the *gibbōr*, who is said to have planned such a sore evil (lii. 2, 3).—**From its forum**. The *r'khōb* (broad place), the *ἀγορά* or 'forum' of the East, devoted alternately to gossip, traffic, and judicial business, was the courtyard adjoining the vaulted passage of the city-gate (cf. *v.* 10 *a*). Hence Isa. lix. 14, 'for truth hath stumbled in the broad place, and rectitude cannot enter (the city).' See Perrot-Chipiez, *History of Art in Chaldæa and Assyria*, ii. 66-72.

13-15 Public grief has had the precedence, but cannot expel the thought of a cruel personal injury. Some may think indeed that there is a personal accent in *v.* 4, but probably the psalmist speaks there in the name of his people. Here, however, one's sympathies seem to be drawn out towards a suffering individual. I can believe that the language used in xli. 10 is that of personification, and am far from denying that in *v.* 22 of this very psalm the subject of the verb may be the ungodly regarded collectively (I would rather say, each ungodly person). But the description in *vv.* 13-15 is individualising to such a singular extent that I cannot bring myself to suppose any poetic fiction in the case. We know what Jeremiah suffered at the hands of

his townsmen (Jer. xi. 21) and other 'men of his peace' (Jer. xx. 10), one of whom perhaps was Pashhur the priest, who might certainly have been called 'a man of [Jeremiah's] rank' (Ps. lv. 14). Without identifying the psalmist with Jeremiah, we may at least argue that at various times of religious dissension and persecution the prophet's experiences may have been renewed. So a prophet in Manasseh's reign says, 'Trust ye not in a companion, put ye not confidence in a familiar friend' (Mic. vii. 5; cf. Jer. ix. 4).

13 **That I might well bear**—as the inevitable lot of God's poor. Calvin, with fine insight, objects that this is not in character with David, who would not have patiently suffered reproach from an open enemy; *nāsā*, he thinks, must mean here to parry the blow ('quod Gallice dicimus, *Jeusse receu le coup*'). But if the psalmist is neither David nor any other warrior? Evidently Segond's '*je le supporterai*' is more accurate than Calvin's version.

14 **A man mine equal**. Lit., 'a man (*'enōsh*) according to my valuing;' i.e. not a true man, one who seemed to come up to my standard (this would require '*ish*')—comp. Jer. v. 1—nor yet a man whom once I valued at the same rate as myself (Sept. *ἄνθρωπε ἰσόψυχε*; comp. Phil. ii. 20), but, one of my own social rank (comp. the verb in lxxxix. 7), with whom therefore I was on easy and natural terms, and who had no claim to lord it over me.

15 **Together we had**, &c. Symm., *ἐκοινολογοῦμεθα γλυκείαν ὀμιλίαν*. The psalmist's complaint assumes the form of a melancholy retrospect. 'At home and in society,' he says, 'we were never far apart' (comp. lxiv. 3, Heb.) *V.* 15 *a* reminds us of Job xix. 19, 'All the men of my intimacy (A.V., my inward friends) abhor me; and those whom I loved are turned against me.' The word *sōdh* also has the sense of 'secret' (xxv. 14) and 'council' (lxxxiii. 4); nor can

we venture to exclude these senses altogether here. With the second line comp. xlii. 5. May we infer that the false friend was also false to his religion?

16 **Death** (here = Sheol; see vi. 6, xviii. 6, xlix. 15) is summoned, that he may **guilefully swallow them up** (lit., 'deceive—swallow them up'). Brüll's correction seems inevitable. The phraseology of line 2 is from Num. xvi. 30; is it not reasonable to expect an allusion to the same passage in line 1, so completing the parallelism? The text-reading is admittedly difficult, and puts a strain on the resources of the interpreter (see crit. note). The idea of *v.* 16 *a* (corrected text) is that of xxxv. 8 *a*.

—**In their dwelling.** Strictly, 'in their settlement,' with the idea of temporariness (cf. Job xviii. 19, Heb.)—**In their midst.** The words supplied before *ʕqirbām* (with Bickell) remove one more thorn from this verse.

17–20 A renewal of spiritual strength is needed after this long outburst of feeling. The speaker knows where to seek it. He will call upon Elohim (the Manifold One, the strong God of the world), and Jehovah (the Self-revealing God of Israel) will hear him. Jehovah, then, is clothed with the might of Elohim. The psalmist will pray without ceasing (first, in silent musing, and then in an inarticulate but not inexpressive moan). The result is as certain as any fact in history; the Hebrew of *v.* 18 *b* suggests this—we might accurately render, 'and he heard my voice.' In *v.* 19 the psalmist still dwells on the thought that prayer is linked to its answer (as sin to punishment; see on lxiv. 8), and expresses this by the 'perfect of prophetic certitude.' In *v.* 20 *a*, with calmed feelings, he states the general truth.

18 Remember that the Hebrew like the Assyrian day began with sunset. The Talmud finds a reference to the three customary times of prayer (Dan. vi. 11, 12, 14); on

this point, R. Joshua ben Chananya was the first Protestant.

19 **For in great numbers, &c.** The clause gives the reason, not why Jehovah will surely deliver him, but why his feelings have been so deeply moved, and his prayer so earnest. The foreign enemies, whose are the greater might and skill (see on *v.* 10), far outnumber the servants of Jehovah (lvi. 3; comp. iii. 2).

20 **Enthroned of old.** Comp. lxxiv. 12, and the Second Isaiah's repeated references to Jehovah's eternity as a pledge of the continuance of His people. The sense of the epithet is clear enough, but how is it fitted into the structure of the verse? If we follow the text (with the one exception admitted even by Delitzsch), we should render, '[God] will hear and answer them—He that sitteth King from of old—these that are changeless and that fear not God.' So De Witt. 'Answer them' means 'give a judicial sentence against' (the ungodly). But surely 'hear and answer' must—especially so near to *vv.* 17, 18—signify 'hear and answer prayer.' Yet how can we connect this with the following words? We cannot. The rest of the psalm has no obvious appropriateness where it stands; at any rate, the next four distichs, which are certainly misplaced, if they are not a later insertion. It is worth noticing that the Hebrew text interposes a 'Selah' between the two distichs of *v.* 20.—**To whom, &c.** Ewald, following the great Dutch scholar Albert Schultens, renders, 'who have no good faith;' but the philological basis of this is unsound. I wish it were otherwise, for the rendering makes the connexion perfect. But what if in the text to which this whole passage (*vv.* 20 *b*–23) must once have belonged, and which doubtless described the character and doings of the ungodly, *v.* 20 *b* stood at the close of a section? In this case, there need not be a parallelism of contents between *v.* 20 *b* and the following distichs. 'Changes' (*ḵhalî-*

fōth) may then mean (*a*), vicissitudes of fortune' (Calvin), comp. x. 6 ; or (*b*) 'changes from evil actions to good' (Hupfeld), comp. Jer. ii. 30, v. 3 ; or (*c*), 'relief-troops' or 'discharges' (Hengstenberg), comp. Job x. 17, xiv. 14. The last of these three meanings is the most ingenious. In *v.* 11 the ungodly are said figuratively to patrol the city-walls like soldiers on the watch. May not a similar figure have occupied the distich to which *v.* 20 *b* must have been attached? In this case *v.* 20 *b* means 'those who are never relieved in, nor discharged from, their godless function of "watching for iniquity"' (see on *v.* 11). The second meaning will to most appear safer ; the distich will then signify 'those who are unceasing in their disregard for religion'—to me a rather weak idea, unnaturally expressed. The first meaning requires too much to be supplied. The text, however, may well be unsound, especially as it gives us an incomplete sentence. May not *khalīfōth* be a corruption of *kharçubbōth*, and the line be a quotation from lxxiii. 3, 'for torments have they none'?

21 What is the subject of the verb? The faithless friend (Hup-

feld, supposing the passage to have stood originally after *v.* 15), or the ungodly collectively (comp. xxxv. 8)? Ps. xli. 10 may seem to favour the former view ; note however that the persecution is (apparently) directed in that passage against an individual, but here against a number of persons. The **covenant** spoken of in *v.* 21 *b* may be, not that between friend and friend (as 1 Sam. xviii. 3, xxiii. 8), but that between members of the same nation, worshipping the same God.

22 The mouth is described as **smooth** (cf. *v.* 10), because deceitful words are produced by it with such fatal facility. Sept. has 'face' instead of 'mouth' (see crit. note).

23, 24 A liturgical appendix (comp. xxvii. 14, xxxi. 25). **Cast thy care.** So Sept. and Pesh., in harmony with the context (comp. xxxvii. 5, xxii. 9). 'Cast thine appointed (lot)' is unnatural ; 'cast thy burden,' ill supported from Arabic, is inconsistent with 'he will support thee.' The precise sense of the noun is uncertain.—**Into the pit of the grave.** Two synonyms joined as cxxxii. 3, Prov. viii. 31, Ezek. xxxvi. 3.—**Half their days.** So Jer. xvii. 11.

PSALM LVI.

THIS and the next psalm are twins ; Ewald considers them among the most beautiful in the Psalter. Both begin in the same way ; both have refrains ; both have the strong expression 'to crush' (lvi. 2, lvii. 4), indicating the heartless cruelty of the enemy. They are, however, not without points of contact with Pss. liv., lv., lix.

- 2 Have pity upon me, Elohim, for man crusheth me ;
fighting all day he oppresseth me.
- 3 All day they crush me that are my keen-eyed enemies,
yea, many with high looks do fight against me.
- 4 The day when I might fear I will trust in thee.
- 5 Through God can I praise his word,
in God do I trust without fear :
what can flesh do unto me ?
- 6 All day they torture me with words :
all their thoughts are against me for evil.

- 7 They attack, they set an ambush ;
they, even they, mark my footsteps,
even as they have long waited for my soul.
- 8 * * * * *
- In anger do thou cast the peoples down, O God.
- 9 My wandering life have I recounted unto thee ;
put thou my tears into thy bottle.
- 10 Straightway shall mine enemies turn back,
the day that I call upon thee :
this I know, that God is for me.
- 11 Through God can I praise his word :
- 12 In God will I trust without fear :
what can man do unto me ?
- 13 Vows made unto thee are upon me, O God :
I will render thank-offerings unto thee.
- 14 For thou hast delivered my soul from death ;
surely [thou hast saved] my feet from stumbling,
that I may walk before God in the light of life.

2 **Man crusheth me.** 'Man,' or 'weak, mortal man' (as a Hebrew writer might naturally explain 'endsh), is opposed to God (as ix. 20, x. 18). 'Crusheth' (note the parallelism), so substantially the versions (comp. Baur on Am. ii. 7). Most moderns, since Gesenius, 'panteth after ;' better perhaps, 'would eat me up.'

4 **When I might fear,** i.e. when I have good excuse for fearing.—**I will trust.** 'I' is emphatic—I, the poor, the weak one.

5 **Through God,** &c. So v. 10 ; comp. lx. 12 and especially Isa. xxvi. 13, 'only through thee (i.e. through thy interposition) can we celebrate thy name.'—**His word,** i.e. his fulfilled word of promise (cxxx. 5).

6 **They torture me with words.** The text has either, 'they torture my words' (but this verb always has a personal object), or 'they hurt my interests' (this is prosaic). Would it not be strange if sins of speech were here alone not imputed to the enemy ?

7 Comp. x. 8, 9. **Even they.** The expression of the pronoun seems at first sight unnecessary.

But it may refer to the men of the ambush, or, more probably, it emphasises the unnaturally cruel conduct of men who have been in covenant with the psalmist (comp. lv. 21).—**Even as,** &c. Their malignant watchfulness is in character with their conduct from the first (comp. lix. 4).

8 In the text, the first line of this verse runs thus : 'In spite of iniquity, an escape unto them,' a short line and of difficult construction, containing, moreover, a word which only occurs elsewhere in a probably corrupt passage (xxxii. 7). See crit. note.—**The peoples.** As in Pss. lv., lix., the chief enemies of the Israelites are at this time heathen, and the psalmist regards their overthrow as a part of the divine judgment upon 'the peoples.' Comp. vii. 7-10.

9 **My wandering life,** &c. The text of this difficult verse is evidently incorrect, but needs gentle treatment (see crit. note). We must not touch the significant word *nōdī*, and so cut out a characteristic play upon words (*nōdī* 'my wandering,' *ʿnōd'ka* 'in thy bottle'). We need not of course try to repro-

duce this play in English, as the idea of the verse is beautiful enough in itself. The psalmist is no lover of vagueness in prayer; he 'makes known his requests' with the utmost particularity. He is a wanderer (the lot deprecated in xxxvi. 12), and his eyes are 'a fountain of tears' (Jer. ix. 1). Shall this stream of sorrow flow in vain? No; **put thou my tears in a bottle** (a skin-bottle of large capacity; see on cxix. 83). To some early readers this may have appeared grotesque, and so a scribe ventured to substitute 'in thy book' (cf. Mal. iii. 17). Probably his view of the meaning was correct; probably the psalmist's thought was, 'Store them up in thy memory.' And yet, if this psalm were the work of a great lyric poet, who, like Dante, bent the forms of poetry to his own ends, we should be justified in seeking a further meaning, such as this—'Store up

my tears as precious wine for that table which thou wilt yet prepare for me in the presence of my foes.' Comp., 'They that sow in tears shall reap in joy' (cxxvi. 5), and George Herbert's line—

I have not lost one single tear.

11 The second line in the received text is a feeble Jehovistic interpolation, which interrupts the refrain.

14 Comp. the parallel in cxvi. 8.—**Before God**, i.e. under His protection (Gen. xvii. 18).—**In the light of life** (or, of the living, as Sept.) The phrase is a deep one (see John viii. 12 and note on xxxvi. 10), and the psalmist may have had a latent consciousness of its fuller meaning. I admit, however, that the context does not force this view upon us, as does that of xvi. 11.

PSALM LVII.

V ERSSES 8-12 are repeated in cviii. 2-6 (an inferior form of the text).

- 2 Have pity upon me, Elohim, have pity upon me,
for in thee my soul takes refuge,
yea, in the shadow of thy wings shall be my refuge,
till the storm of ruin hath passed by.
- 3 I call unto God most High,
unto the Strong One that deals bountifully with me.
- 4 He shall reach out from heaven and save me,
giving to dishonour him that would crush me;
God shall send forth his lovingkindness and his truthfulness.
- 5 My soul has dwelt among lions,
fire-breathers, (but) sons of men,—
their teeth are spears and arrows,
and their tongue a sharp sword.
- 6 Exalt thyself, O God, above the heavens;
let thy glory be above all the earth.
- 7 They have prepared a net for my feet;
they have bowed down my soul—they have digged before me
a pit into whose midst they have fallen!
- 8 Stedfast is my heart, O God, stedfast is my heart;
I would sing and make melody.

- 9 Awake, my glory ; awake, harp and lyre ;
fain would I awaken the dawn.
- 10 I will give thanks unto thee, O Lord, among the peoples,
I will make melody unto thee among the nations :
- 11 For thy lovingkindness is great unto the heavens,
and thy truth unto the skies.
- 12 Exalt thyself, O God, above the heavens ;
let thy glory be above all the earth.

2 **The storm of ruin.** Heb. *havvōth*. Etymologically, the figure is that of a yawning gulf (see on v. 10), but the choice of the verb suggests that a storm is more present to the writer's imagination.

3 **God most High.** Heb. *'elōhīm 'elyōn*, which occurs again only in lxxviii. 56 ; we have, however, *'el 'elyōn* in lxxviii. 35 (and virtually lxxiii. 11), and *Yahveh 'elyōn* in vii. 18 (see note). The word is here equivalent to 'almighty' (see v. 6).

4 Line 1 reminds us of xviii. 17 ; line 3 of xliii. 3, where 'light' (more suitable to the figure of a guide) takes the place of 'loving-kindness' in the divine *συνμαχία*. Line 2 in the Hebrew interrupts the description of God's gracious activity with the short and abrupt statement, 'he that would crush me hath insulted.' We can no doubt treat this as a 'circumstantial clause' (see Driver, *Hebrew Tenses*, § 163), and render 'my enemy having insulted me,' but at the cost of simplicity, the two parts of the sentence thus produced being (as Hitzig remarks) not in any close relation to each other. See crit. note.

5 This verse explains the second line of v. 2. 'In thee my soul

takes refuge, because it dwells and has long dwelt among "beasts in human form"' (Ignatius ; comp. on xxii. 13). How common the lion once was in Palestine, is shown by the numerous words for it in Hebrew ; that here used (*lbbhī*, in plur. *lbbām*) seems to mean 'the voracious' (comp. Hos. xiii. 8). Presumably the enemies described are foreigners (comp. on xxii. 13).

—**My soul has dwelt.** The same phrase as in cxx. 6. The text has, '(With) my soul let me (since I must) lie down,' a very improbable sentence ; a slight correction suffices to restore naturalness. — **Fire-breathers.** Or, 'fiery-eyed.'

6 God is by right '*Elyōn* 'most High ;' may He now show Himself in fact supreme over and superior to all created things. There is no occasion to render '*al* 'above' in line 1, and 'over' = throughout in line 2. See end of note on viii. 2.

8 **Stedfast**, i.e. 'rooted and grounded' in the fear of Jehovah (see on li. 12), and therefore fearless. Comp. cxii. 7.

9 **My glory ;** see on vii. 6. — **Awaken the dawn.** Milton's 'cheerly rouse the slumbering morn.' See on cxxxix. 9.

PSALM LVIII.

VERSES 2, 3 must be explained by Ps. lxxxii. (see introd.) The situation may be described thus : Ungodliness and wrong have made such progress, that the psalmist can only ascribe it to supernatural agency. The 'gods' or 'sons of the Most High' (lxxxii. 6), to whom the actual administration of the world's government has been entrusted (Deut. xxxii. 8), have neglected their duties, and in the persons of their subordinates have actually helped forward the cause of wickedness. From the wicked

tyranny practised, even in the land of Israel (see on *v.* 4), the psalmist seems to have inferred that Jehovah had withdrawn from the government of that 'inheritance' which, according to the Song of Moses (Deut. xxxii. 9), He had reserved for Himself.¹ Observe that from *v.* 4 onwards we hear no more of the 'ēlim. What their fate is to be, the psalmist saith not, and there is an analogy for this silence in Isa. xxiv. 22, where the imprisonment referred to is that of the 'kings of the earth,' not that of their heavenly patrons. It is otherwise in lxxxii. 7.

- 2 Do ye indeed speak righteousness, O ye gods?
do ye judge in equity the sons of men?
- 3 (Nay,) surely ye all prepare unjust acts;
ye weigh out in the earth the violence of your hands.
- 4 The ungodly have been estranged since the womb:
they have gone astray from their birth, speakers of lies.
- 5 They have poison as the poison of a serpent:
yea, as that of a deaf adder which stops her ear;
- 6 Which will not hearken to the voice of charmers,
nor of the most cunning binder of spells.
- 7 Elohim! shatter their teeth in their mouth:
tear out the jawbones of the young lions, Jehovah.
- 8 Let them melt as water that runs away;
as grass, let them be quickly cut off:
- 9 [Let them be] as a snail melting as it goes along,
as an untimely birth which never saw the sun.
- 10 Before your pots can feel the thorns,
[and] while your [flesh] is [still] raw,
the hot wrath (of Jehovah) shall sweep it away.
- 11 The righteous shall rejoice that he has seen vengeance,
he shall wash his feet in the blood of the ungodly;
- 12 And men shall say, Surely there is a fruit for the righteous,
surely there are divine powers that judge in the earth.

2 **Do ye indeed**, &c. Comparing this passage with lxxxii. 2, &c., it seems most probable that the speaker is the most High. The 'ēlim (see on xxix. 1) or 'elōhīm (lxxxii. 1) have presented themselves before Jehovah, and reported that they have exercised a righteous sway in the world of men. Jehovah first expresses a sarcastic doubt of this, and then, as He who seeth and knoweth all, declares the contrary. See crit. note.

3 **(Nay,) surely ye all.** A

direct negative is unnecessary; the particle used implies a strong antithesis (see on *v.* 12). 'Ye all;' the world must be at its darkest before the bright light of Jehovah will dawn (Isa. lx. 2). See crit. note.

—**Ye weigh out.** A severe sarcasm. 'Ye are as accurate in injustice as ye ought to be in administering justice.' An example of that Semitic ὀξύμωρον which in Arabic literature exceeds the bounds of discretion (see, e.g., Hariri, *passim*).

4 Here the psalmist drops the

¹ In this remarkable passage 'Elyōn ('the most High') means Him who is supreme both over the 'Sons of El' or 'Elohim' and over the nations which he assigns to those inferior supernatural beings. See *Job and Solomon*, pp. 81, 291.

'*elīm* (see above), and passes into a description of the wicked men, who prosper through the neglect of the heavenly powers and their human instruments. It is not expressly said, but from the position of the psalm and from the ideas of *v.* 1, 2, it is most probable that these 'ungodly' men are, at any rate chiefly, foreigners (see on ix. 5).—**Have been estranged, &c.**

Calvin finds it difficult to reconcile this with the doctrine of original sin; but the psalmists are no theologians, and simply record in poetic language here and elsewhere the facts of an experience, which Calvin throughout his noble commentary admits to agree with his own, and which shows 'quosdam esse verendos et honestis moribus: alios mediocri tantum corruptela imbutos: alios vero naturæ adeo perversæ, ut sint prorsus intolerabiles.' The words of *v.* 4 simply mean that evil habits have to these men become a second nature; they are *αἰ τῶ κακῶ χαίροντες* (Theod. Mops.)

5, 6 Comp. Sir. xxv. 15, 'There is no poison (*κεφάλη* = *שׂוֹן*) above the poison of a serpent, and no wrath above the wrath of an enemy.' On serpent-charming, comp. Jer. viii. 17, Eccles. x. 11, Sir. xii. 10, and an Arabic proverb for obstinate resistance, 'Answer not, serpent' (Meidani).

7 Description passes into imprecation, with an 'Elohim' emphatically placed first, and the figure changes to that of a lion (comp. lvii. 5). 'Charming' being impossible, violent means must be adopted for curbing such foes.

8, 9 Four terribly strong figures for the utter destruction of the wicked. *V.* 8 *b* runs, in the received text, 'when he aims his arrows, let them be as if they were headless, which Segond polishes into, 'qu'ils ne lancent que des traits émoussés,' without making the image itself a better parallel to that in line 1. See crit. note.—**As a snail, &c.** Alluding to the slimy trail which the snail leaves behind it, for surely we need not think of the 'myriads

of snail shells' still found adhering to the surface of rocks in Palestine (Tristram, *Nat. Hist. of Bible*, p. 295).—**The untimely birth.** Comp. Job iii. 16, Eccles. vi. 3-5.

10 From the time of the ancient versions this verse has challenged interpreters by its obscurity. I can but offer a rendering of the text as corrected. The key to lines 1 and 2 is the description of the persecuted people of Jehovah, in Mic. iii. 2, 3, as with skin plucked off and broken bones, and made ready for the caldron. The wicked oppressors of Israel have done the like in the time of the psalmist. In figurative language, pots full of flesh have been placed on a fire of thorns (comp. Eccles. vii. 6), or, more strictly, of '*ātād* or buck-thorn, which, as Jotham hints (Judg. ix. 15), readily takes fire, though the flame may not last (cxviii. 12). The cook stands by, watching to see on the pots the effect of the burning thorns. But One above 'quenches the violence of the fire' (Heb. xi. 34), or rather, before the sparks of flame can affect the still raw flesh, a tempest sweeps the man away. It is, however, no common whirlwind, but the divine wrath which falls, like a burning simoom (xi. 6), upon Jehovah's enemy; comp. lxxxiii. 15, Job xxvii. 21. Meantime, what of the tormented righteous? The key to line 3 is a passage in Ezekiel (xi. 7), where the Jews in Jerusalem are warned that they are not safe even in the 'caldron' of misery (besieged Jerusalem), but shall be fetched out thence to suffer the punishment of their bloody deeds. So, by a different application of the figure, the psalmist declares (taking *v.* 10 with *v.* 11) that the righteous, released from their 'caldron' of persecution, shall look with satisfaction on the divine vengeance. The various attempts to explain the received text are failures. How can the sweeping away of pot, flesh, and fuel be a figure for the sudden ruin of the plans of the wicked? And how too can the

psalmist leave the fate of the wicked man himself out of his description? Hengstenberg sees the force of the latter objection, and therefore renders 'shall sweep *him* away.' But the text as it stands will not allow this. We might of course emend 'your pots' and 'your flesh' into 'his pots' and 'his flesh;' but it is really less arbitrary to admit at once the mutilation and corruption of the text, and adopt Bickell's very natural way of remedying these (see crit. note). For the figure of the boiling caldron, comp. 1 Pet. iv. 12, τῆ ἐν ὑμῖν πυρώσει.

11 The **righteous** probably are the Israelites as a nation (cf. on v. 4); the antithesis reminds us of lxviii. 3, 4 (see note). Other nations 'walk in the name of their (unrighteous) gods' (Mic. iv. 5), but Israel, walking in the name of Jehovah, 'follows after a law of righteousness' (Rom. ix. 31). Power, knowledge, art, may be their ideals; but Israel's is righteousness; hence his family name is Jeshurun 'the upright.' We must perhaps admit that the use of such a phrase implies a consciousness of innocence such as the Israelites did not possess in the Babylonian, but did possess in the Maccabean period.

—**That he has seen vengeance.** Dante may comment on this—

O Signor mio, quando sarò io lieto
A veder la vendetta, che nascosa
Fa dolce l'ira tua nel tuo segreto?
Purg. xx. 94-96.

—**He shall wash his feet.** Cf. lxviii. 24.

12 The confession of the rest of mankind that, in spite of the doubts which have so long harassed them (78 'but surely;' see on lxviii. 1, 18), 'it is well with the righteous, for the *fruit of their doings* do they eat' (Isa. iii. 10); or perhaps, more precisely, 'it is well with the righteous nation, Israel' (Isa. xxvi. 2; comp. the congratulatory song of mankind, Isa. xxiv. 16): and further, that the 'divine powers do really trouble themselves about men, and 'judge in the earth.' The poet doubtless intends a contrast between the 'ēlīm (v. 2) and the 'elōhīm (v. 12); so too 'judge, 'men' ('ādām) in v. 2, and 'in the earth' (v. 3) correspond to the same expressions in v. 12. 'Elōhīm with the plural (contrast Gen. i. 1), because the speakers are, not merely in expression but in feeling,¹ polytheists: an explanation which may not suit all the passages in which this construction is found, but which is required by some, e.g. by 1 Sam. iv. 7, 8 (in v. 7 read 782 with Sept.)

PSALM LIX.

THESE companion-psalms resemble each other, but the most important parallels to Ps. lix. are in Ps. lv. The situation of the psalmist is obscure; but who the most dreaded foes are, is clear enough from vv. 6, 9, 12, 14. Notice the refrains in vv. 7, 15 and 10, 18; the two former are *initial* refrains (see on Pss. lxii., lxvii., and cf. Am. i. 3, 6, &c).

- 2 Deliver me from mine enemies, O my God,
set me secure from them that assail me :
- 3 Deliver me from the workers of wickedness,
and save me from the men of blood.
- 4 For lo they have long lain in wait for my soul ;

¹ This is said to forestall a criticism. In expression, the authors of Pss. lviii. and lxxxii. are polytheists, but in feeling they are monotheists. Some rags of polytheism may still cling to them, but they are working their way to a monotheism like that of the author of Pss. ciii., civ.

- fierce (invaders) attack me
without any transgression or sin of mine, Jehovah.
- 5 Without my fault they run and take their place ;
awake thou to meet me, and behold.
- 6 But thou, Jehovah Sabáoth, Israel's God,
rouse thee to visit all the nations ;
have no pity on all these wicked traitors.
- 7 They come evening after evening, they snarl like dogs,
and go round about the city.
- 8 Behold, they belch out with their mouth,
swords are in their lips,
for ' Who hears ? '
- 9 But thou, Jehovah, laughest at them,
thou mockest at all the nations.
- 10 My strength, unto thee will I make melody,
for God is my sure retreat.
- 11 My God shall meet me with his lovingkindness,
God shall make me look my fill upon my spying enemies.
- 12 Slay them not, lest my people forget ;
by thine army make them to wander,
and cast them down, O Lord our shield.
- 13 Their mouth sins by each word of their lips,
therefore let them be taken in their pride,
and for the cursing and lying which they talk.
- 14 Make an end in wrath, make an end, that they be no more,
and let them know that Elohim is ruler in Jacob,
unto the ends of the earth.
- 15 And they come evening after evening, they snarl like a dog,
and go round about the city.
- 16 They indeed wander about to devour,
they murmur if they be not satisfied ;
- 17 But I will sing of thy strength,
and will ring out thy lovingkindness in the morning,
for thou hast been unto me a sure retreat
and a refuge in the day of my trouble.
- 18 My strength, unto thee will I make melody,
for God is my sure retreat,
the God of my lovingkindness.

4-6 Observe the stress laid on the unprovoked aggression and on the treachery of the foe (comp. Isa. xxxiii. 1) ; also on his 'fierceness,' a quality which in fellow-Israelites

was contrary to the primary law in Lev. xix. 18. *V. 4 a, b* reminds us of lvi. 7 ; comp. liv. 5.

6 'But *thou*, being what thou art, Jehovah, Israel's God, and yet

also the disposer of hosts of supernatural and natural¹ powers, be not like one in a deep sleep (Jer. xiv. 9, Sept.); succour us once for all by a general judgment upon **all the nations**' (see on v. 9, and comp. on lvi. 8). This latter phrase decides the question as to the foes spoken of; they are, primarily at least, foreigners (comp. liv. 5), and therefore enemies of Jehovah's people. The war is a religious war, and as long as these naturally hostile peoples remain there is no peace for Israel. This is why the psalmist says, 'all the nations,' and not, as some by their paraphrase show that they would rather he had said, 'all these heathenish men.'—**Jehovah Sabáoth.** The text has '*Yahveh 'Elohím Çebáoth,*' which Olshausen explains as a triple name of Israel's God. This latter statement goes too far; Sabáoth may be in process of becoming a personal name, but it is not altogether so; we cannot say with Spenser (*Mutability*), 'May I that Sabaoth see.' The case is different from that of Astar-Kemos, a compound divine name of two independent personal names (cf. also Hadad-Rimmon). Most probably, however, '*Elohím* in our passage is an editorial correction which was intended to supersede the name Jehovah. In lxxx. 8, 15 the received text actually gives us the 'impossible form' (Bickell) '*Elohím Çebáoth*'; the equally impossible form quoted above recurs in lxxx. 5, 20, lxxxiv. 9. The latter is specially surprising here, since directly after we read '*Elóhē Yisráēl.*' Comp. on xxiv. 10.

7 Here, with a description of the recreant Israelitish enemies, a new stanza begins.—**They come,** &c. Lit., 'they keep returning at evening.'—**Like dogs.** The half-wild dogs of an Eastern city, referred to in xxii. 17 (note); comp. Matt. vii. 6, xix. 24, Mark x. 25.—**Go round about.** Some infer from this expression that the

psalmist's city was being besieged or blockaded. But there is no more occasion for this inference here than in lv. 11. They seek out opportunities for disquieting and robbing the righteous (v. 16)—that is the meaning of the phrase.

8 **They belch out,** viz. 'arrogant things,' as xciv. 4. The same verb in a good sense in xix. 3, cxix. 171.—**Swords,** &c. Cf. lv. 22, lvii. 5.—**Who hears?** Cf. x. 11, 13, lxiv. 6, lxxiii. 11, xciv. 7.

9 **Laughed at them,** for they *have become* 'aliens from the commonwealth of Israel,' and are infected with the folly of 'all the nations.' Comp. xxxvii. 13, and still more ii. 4, the context of which refers to a similar madness on the part of 'the nations.' Does the psalmist regard the present calamities of Israel as the first stage in that great uprising of the heathen world so vividly described in Joel iii.?

12 **Slay them not,** &c. We need not attempt to reconcile this with v. 14; the inconsistency is due to the psalmist's mental agitation (comp. on lxxxiii. 16). His first thought is that by lingering on in life for awhile the wicked may be more edifying monuments of the divine anger. For a parallel see Ex. ix. 16, 'But in very deed for this cause have I kept thee alive, to show in thee my power, and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth.'—**By thine army.** So Hitzig and Riehm, Delitzsch more than half assenting. The 'army' is the heavenly host, the 'heroes' (*gibbōrim*; see on ciii. 20) whom Jehovah Sabáoth will summon to the valley of Jehoshaphat (Joel iv. 14). The ungodly heathen nations are to become vagabonds, and beg their bread (see cix. 10, Heb.), chased, like the Wandering Jew, by invisible angels (comp. xxxv. 5, 6).

13 **Cursing.** Ewald, as also in x. 7, 'perjury;' but this is more allowable as exegesis than as translation.

¹ The reader will pardon this anachronism; such logical distinctions are no part of the psalmist's intellectual world. But see on Ps. ciii. 20, 21.

14 See on *v.* 12. The ungodly, in perishing, are to acknowledge that Jehovah, Israel's God, is the ruler of the world.

16, 17 An antithesis between the insatiable greed of the traitorous Israelites (?) and the praiseful religious trust of the psalmist.

PSALM LX.

ISRAEL has but now sustained a grievous defeat in an expedition against Edom, and in Israel's name the psalmist implores deliverance and an answer of peace. The answer comes; but the psalmist's joy is not untroubled by doubt, and the contrast between the third stanza and the second is so great that one is tempted to suppose *vv.* 8-10 to be a quotation subsequently added from an older psalm. In truth, if these verses really contain a special revelation to the psalmist, how can we account for his relapse into despondency (*vv.* 7-14 are repeated in Ps. cviii.)?

- 3 Elohim, thou hast cast us off and scattered us,
thou hast been angry, O vouchsafe to restore us !
- 4 Thou hast made the land to quake ; thou hast cleft it ;
heal the breaches thereof, for it totters.
- 5 Thou hast caused thy people to see hard things ;
thou hast made us to drink the wine of reeling.
- 6 Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee,
(only) that they may flee before the bow.
- 7 That thy beloved ones may be delivered,
save with thy right hand, and answer us.
- 8 God has promised by his holiness ; let me triumph (therein) ;
I shall divide Shechem, and mete out the valley of Succoth.
- 9 Mine shall be Gilead and mine Manasseh,
Ephraim also the defence of my head ;
Judah my staff of command :
- 10 Moab shall be my washpot, over Edom shall I cast out my shoe :
over Philistia shall I break into shouting.
- 11 Who will bring me into the entrenched city ?
who can lead me into Edom ?
- 12 Surely thou, O God, hast cast us off,
and goest not forth, O God, with our armies.
- 13 O give us help from trouble,
for vain is man's deliverance.
- 14 Through God we shall do valiantly,
and it is he that shall tread down our foes.

4, 5 To express the severity of the blow, the poet says that land and people have both suffered. This is one among many evidences in the O.T. of the primitive sentiment of the intimate union between

a people and its land (see on Hos. ii. 3). Torn from its native soil, and therefore (as it seemed) from its god, a primitive nation 'collapsed' entirely; a crushing defeat like the present seemed the prelude of such

a wreck, the effects of which the poet naturally extended to the land for which he had some of the feelings of a lover. Comp. 4 *b* with Isa. iii. 6, 7, xxx. 13.

5 **Wine of reeling.** Another psalmist has finely developed this figure (lxxv. 9), which indeed became a commonplace of the prophets (see Isa. li. 17, Jer. xxv. 15-17, xlix. 12, Ezek. xxiii. 32-34, and comp. Jer. li. 7, Zech. xii. 2).

6 We have no right to convert this verse into a suggestion of comfort, 'Thou hast given a banner for the fugitives to rally round and renew the fight' (this requires too much to be supplied). The only natural view is that which sees in *v.* 6 a continuation of the description of calamity in *v.* 5. Unfortunately *v.* 6 *b* in the received text obstinately refuses to harmonise with this view. Hence Delitzsch (somewhat as Calvin) connects *v.* 6 with *v.* 7, and explains, 'Since thou hast given thy people a banner, that we may lift ourselves up bannerwise because of the truth, therefore help, in order that thy beloved ones may be delivered.' This connexion might be accepted, in spite of the fact that *v.* 7 begins the extract in Ps. cviii., if it pointed the way to even a plausible interpretation of *v.* 5 *b*; but can it be said to have done so? Can a poet have expressed himself as Del. supposes the psalmist to have done? Besides, even if 'to lift oneself up' be an admissible rendering of *Phithnōsēs* (see Zech. ix. 16), 'because of (i.e. to further the interests of) the truth' is not a possible rendering of the complementary words. In short, the only satisfactory view is that of Ewald, who sees in the Hebrew of *v.* 6 *b* a characteristic wordplay (comp. lvi. 9). 'Thou gavest us indeed a banner, when we took the field for the true religion; but what a banner! Far from being a rallying-point for God's warriors, it seemed as if only in-

tended to scatter us in flight.' There is one deficiency, however, in Ewald's comment, viz. that he does not propose to insert **Ἰ** at the beginning of line 3, though the insertion improves the rhythm and is indispensable for the sense.

7 **Answer us**, viz. by 'terrible acts of righteousness' (lxv. 6), at least if *vv.* 8-10 were a later addition. If, however, these verses were placed where they now stand by the psalmist himself, they may be taken as the desired 'answer' to prayer. That they contain the substance of a prophecy, is no objection; prophetic revelation is in Jer. xxxiii. represented as an answer to prayer.

8-10 Does this strophe contain the very words of a divine oracle, or is it merely a picturesque elaboration of its substance? In the former case, it is Jehovah who says, 'Let me triumph, dividing Shechem,' &c.;¹ in the latter, some Israelitish general encourages himself by this divine word of promise. A passage like Isa. xlii. 13 (where 'he shall shout'—the same verb as in *v.* 10, only Hifil—is said of Jehovah, who is compared to a 'man of war') may make us hesitate to pronounce the former view impossible. Still, the extremely realistic details incline one to prefer the latter. Delitzsch thinks that the substratum is the promise of Nathan (2 Sam. vii. 9, &c.), which is similarly recast or adapted as the case may be in Pss. ii., lxxxix.—**God has promised** (comp. the use of the verb in lxxxvii. 3, Deut. vi. 3, xii. 20, xix. 8). Or (if God be the speaker in the following verses), 'God has sworn' (lit., 'hath spoken').—**By his holiness** (comp. lxxxix. 36, Am. iv. 2). The oath or promise is inviolable like Jehovah's majesty. Comp. cv. 42, 'his holy promise (lit., 'word').—**Divide . . . mete out.** Alluding to the original distribution of Canaan (see Joshua).—**Shechem . . . Succoth.** The former represents the west, the latter the

¹ So Ewald, who however makes 'let me triumph' a parenthetic exclamation of the psalmist.

east side of the Jordan. There were, it seems, other Succoths, but the 'valley' in which this Succoth lay was, we may infer, specially populous (Josh. xiii. 27) and fruitful (see on lxv. 14). So too in a high degree was the district of Shechem. Both places are mentioned together in a narrative known perhaps to the psalmist (Gen. xxxiii. 17, 18, R.V.), according to which Jacob-Israel sojourned at Succoth ('Deir Ula') on his way to 'the city of Shechem.'
 9 Gilead and Manasseh, Ephraim and Judah are again geographically representative.—**My staff of command.** Alluding to the royal dignity of Judah (see Gen. xlix. 10).

10 Ewald (see *Salomonische Schriften*, p. 427, 'Zusätze') strangely enough sees here a description of the successive preparations of the royal warrior for repose. But the language does but represent figuratively the subjugation of Israel's most troublesome neighbours—that of Moab is described with a contumely reminding us of Isa. xxv. 10.—**Cast out my shoe**, on the other hand, is probably a legal symbol for taking 'seisin' of a piece of land. In Ruth iv. 7 (cf. Deut. xxv. 9) the drawing off the shoe is a form which expresses giving up a right; a similar Arabic phrase signifies divorce (see Delitzsch). That there is no example of a phrase like the psalmist's elsewhere in the O.T., may be ascribed to accident. But, even without this supposition, a poet might easily coin such a figure

on the analogy of a familiar legal form. I do not venture to seek further light from Mr. McLennan's theories. Philistia is mentioned last as most westerly; she loved to taunt Israel of old (comp. 2 Sam. i. 20), now she is to be taunted herself.—**Shall I break into**, &c. So cviii. 9 reads. The text (which I only mean to paraphrase) reads, when rightly pointed, 'is my shouting.' The received text, however, gives a different colour to the line, 'Philistia, triumph thou because of me' (as a new subject), or, ironically, 'triumph, if thou canst;' or, perhaps, 'cry aloud for pain because of me' (cf. Isa. xv. 4, Heb.)

11-14 'But who, oh! who, will conduct my champion-warriors through the strong entrenchments of the Edomitish city?' (v. 11), i.e. probably, the rock-city Sela; cf. 2 Kings xiv. 7. The psalmist (who speaks, as in vv. 3-7, for Israel) longs for a divine guide. But, alas! Jehovah has 'surely cast us off and goeth not forth,' &c. (v. 12).—**Surely thou**, &c. Hitzig plausibly, 'Who but thou, O God, who hast (hitherto) cast us off?' &c. This facilitates the defence of the unity of feeling and of composition, but is not the most natural construction of the Hebrews. In v. 3 the complaint 'thou hast cast off' refers to time present, and so in the parallel passage xlv. 10. The speaker yearns for reconciliation with God, and through prayer rises out of his depression into triumphant faith (vv. 13, 14).

PSALM LXI.

PRAYERS of a pious Israelite afar (as it seems) from the Holy Land. Must he be a king because of v. 9? At any rate, the petition for the king (v. 7) connects this psalm with lxiii.

- 2 Hear my cry, Elohim,
 attend unto my prayer.
- 3 From the utmost part of the earth
 I call unto thee with fainting heart;
 lead me upon the rock that is too high for me.

- 4 For thou hast been a refuge to me,
a strong tower against the enemy.
- 5 Let me be a guest in thy pavilion perpetually,
let me take refuge in the hiding-place of thy wings.
- 6 For thou, O God, hast hearkened to my vows,
thou hast granted the request of those that fear thy name.
- 7 Mayest thou prolong the king's life,
may his years be for generations on generations.
- 8 May he sit before God for ever ;
appoint (thy) lovingkindness and truthfulness to guard him.
- 9 So will I make melody unto thy name for ever,
that I may perform my vows day by day.

2 **My cry.** Heb. *rinnāthī*, 'my piercing cry' (see xvii. 1, and note on v. 11).

3 **From the utmost part of the earth.** The natural exaggeration of one parted from all that his soul counts most dear. Whether we are to explain the phrase of the land beyond Jordan, whither David for instance betook himself at a great moment of his life, or of some more distant region (the speaker being supposed to belong to the great Diaspora), is disputed. The analogy of Ps. xlii. (if interpreted rightly above) seems, however, to point to the former view (the connexion with David being of course left uncertain). To one who mourns such spiritual privations as the psalmist, the 'end of the land' is virtually the 'end of the earth;' such is the power of feeling sometimes to exaggerate, sometimes to extenuate difficulties. Comp. on lxiii. 2 c.—**Lead me upon the rock,** &c. All safe retreats seem to be on eminences too far off for him to reach and too high for him to climb.

4 **For thou hast been,** &c. 'Thou hast been true to thy covenant-purpose of love, true to thy sacred name, 'I am'—or 'I will

be' (viz. whatever Israel my people needs), Ex. iii. 14.¹

5 The psalmist shares the longing of his fellow-believer in xv. 1, but piles another big word on the phrase—**perpetually** (more literally, 'for æons' (*'ōlāmim*²)).

6 According to Ewald, a verse has dropped out after v. 5, expressing the psalmist's desire to praise God in His temple, upon which would follow, 'that thou, O God hast,' &c.; comp. liv. 8, 9. This however, seems unnecessary. V. 6 is a preface to vv. 7, 8; v. 9 is their supplement. The tenses are prophetic perfects (cf. xx. 7); the psalmist confidently anticipates the fulfilment of his prayers. Vows and prayers go together in v. 6; praise, as the fulfilment of the vows, is the theme of v. 9. Midway come specimens of the 'requests' or 'petitions' of 'those that fear Thy name' (comp. xxi. 4, note). The received text has, not 'request,' but 'heritage'—i.e. perhaps the land of Israel, which may have been recently delivered from a dreaded foe.

7, 8 a See on xxi. 5. The prayer in 8 b reminds us of xl. 12. The verb rendered 'appoint' is used of God's providential appointments in Jon. ii. 1 (i. 17), iv. 6, 7, 8.

¹ Comp. Dr. Robertson Smith, *British and Foreign Evangelical Review*, Jan. 1876, p. 161.

² The plural of *'ōlām* is rare in the Psalter. In lxxvii. 6 it signifies ancient times, in cxliii. 13 the whole course of the world's existence.

PSALM LXII.

SOME pious Israelite of high rank (see *v.* 5) is in imminent danger from malignant opponents, and encourages himself and his companions to hold fast to their faith. The last four distichs are in a different key, and seem to claim prophetic inspiration (see on *v.* 12). Observe two peculiarities of this psalm, the six times repeated particle אֵל (see on *v.* 2), and the refrains at the *beginning* of the first and second strophes (comp. on Pss. lix., lxvii.) There are some resemblances to Pss. iv. and xxxix.

- 2 Be all at rest, my soul, toward Elohim ;
from him comes my salvation.
- 3 He alone is my rock and my salvation,
my sure retreat—I cannot be shaken.
- 4 How long will ye be frantic against a man ?
will ye be dashing in pieces all of you—
as it were a toppling wall, a fence pushed in ?
- 5 They only consult how to thrust him from his dignity ;
they delight in lies ; they each of them bless with the mouth,
but inwardly they curse.
- 6 Be all at rest, my soul, toward Elohim,
for my expectation is from him.
- 7 He alone is my rock and my salvation,
my sure retreat—I cannot be shaken.
- 8 Upon God rests my salvation and my honour ;
the rock of my stronghold and my refuge are—God.
- 9 Trust ye in him, O assembly of the people ;
pour out your heart before him ;
God is a refuge for us.
- 10 Simply vanity are men of low degree, the lordly are (simply) a lie ;
being weighed in the balances, they are altogether as a breath.
- 11 Trust not in perverseness, neither become vain by crookedness :
if riches shoot up (as a plant), give no heed thereto.
- 12 God hath spoken once ; twice have I heard this ;
that strength belongs unto God :
- 13 Thine, too, Jehovah, is lovingkindness,
for thou renderest unto every man according to his work.

2 **Be all at rest**, &c. Hitzig's 'Nur auf Gott still hoffet meine Seele' preserves the order of the Hebrew, but, as this critic points out in his note, the particle אֵל , which some render 'only,' others 'surely,' and others even 'nevertheless'

(comp. on lxxiii. 1), by no means always affects the words most closely which it immediately precedes. To render this fine phrase briefly is difficult. The sense is, 'Do nothing but look trustfully to Jehovah ;' 'stillness' is the root-idea of

the verb, a 'stillness' which implies not merely the cessation of that moaning of which another psalmist speaks (xlii. 6, &c.), but also of use-less endeavours to bring one's own feet out of the net (xxv. 15). For the idea, comp. Lam. iii. 26; for the corrected reading, see crit. note.

4 **Against a man.** Observe that here, as in Psalm iv., it is on the ground of humanity, not of a common citizenship in Israel, that the speaker appeals to his enemies.

5 **They only consult, &c.** There is a fine though subtle connexion with *vv.* 3, 7. *Only* God can be my helper, for my enemies are *only* considering how to destroy me. A single humane thought on their part would have been to me a secret ally; but I am quite alone, or in the midst of friends who are paralysed by despair (see on *v.* 9). The mention of the psalmist's endangered 'dignity,' and of the delighting of his foes in falsehood; reminds us of iv. 3. For the description which follows comp. xii. 3, xxviii. 3, lv. 22.

9 This verse forms a transition to the last strophe. The speaker forgets his 'dignity,' and speaks to his fellow-believers, whose dangers, and whose high hopes, he shares. Or rather, he puts more value on the permanent functions of a wise man and a teacher than on the accidental dignity of leadership thrust upon him by the exigencies of the times. In rendering **O assembly of the people** I follow Sept. (see crit. note).

10, 11 Here the psalmist becomes didactic. The connexion, however, is not at first sight clear. Does this verse contain the encouraging thought that the numerous band of the enemies of Israel has but an apparent existence, all men being naturally but 'vanity' (or, 'a breath') and 'a lie' (both names given to the idol-gods, Jer. ii. 5, Am. ii. 5)? A comparison of xxxix. 6, 7 suggests a safer view. There the connexion is, that pious Israelites are tempted by the oppression which they suffer from the rich and

prosperous ungodly to covet the 'mammon of unrighteousness.' To meet this temptation, the psalmist is led through a fierce conflict to the conviction that piling up treasure is irrational, because man has but a short and, as it were, phantom existence. We see from iv. 7, 8 that in very similar circumstances a psalmist had to warn his friends against thinking too much of material blessings.

11 For **perverseness** and **crookedness** the text has 'oppression' and 'robbery' (which in fact are parallel terms in Ezek. xxii. 29). But what sense does this give? Why should the psalmist's companions in misfortune be exhorted not to centre their trust on such objects? On the other hand we cannot suppose a sudden transition to the hostile party, because of the evident connexion of this verse with *v.* 10. Besides, how little would the enemy have minded a gentle caution not to trust in their high-handed policy of injustice! The correction of the text adopted is in harmony with the didactic tinge of this part of the psalm. The wise man whose work introduces the 'proverbs of Solomon' describes those who are the enemies of true wisdom as men who 'are perverse in their paths and crooked in their ways' (Prov. ii. 22)—a passage which seems to me more completely parallel than Isa. xxx. 12 (following the Sept. with Bishop Lowth), where 'perverseness' and 'crookedness' have perhaps a more special reference to false statecraft. In our psalm it is not worldly politicians but average Israelites who are addressed—those to whom another psalmist addresses the warning, 'O lovers of Jehovah, hate ye that which is evil' (xcvii. 10). 'Trust in Jehovah' means, not merely belonging to the 'assembly of the people' (*v.* 9), but 'doing that which is good' (xxxvii. 3), and to 'be at rest towards Jehovah' is incompatible with 'being incensed' at the prosperity of the unjust, an irritation which 'would only lead

to evil-doing' (xxxvii. 7, 8). The great teacher, therefore, who speaks here, warns the 'assembly' against practically transferring their 'trust' from Jehovah to a course of action which may be lucrative but which He abhors.—**Neither become vain.** He said before that men of high and low degree were equally vanity; but now he warns his hearers not to 'become vain.' Why is this? Because to the believer Jehovah 'makes known the path of (true) life' (xvi. 12); 'vanity of vanities' was not said of life in God, which is the only real life to the psalmists. Comp. Jer. ii. 5, '(your fathers) walked after that which is vanity and became vain' (so 2 Kings xvii. 15).—**If riches shoot up.** Obviously he means the riches of the ungodly, which the faithful are warned not to gaze at, lest, like wine (Prov. xxiii. 31), the glittering heaps should fascinate them. The figure in the verb is peculiar; Sept. substitutes a more common one, *πλοῦτος ἐὰν ῥέη* (cf. Milton's 'flowing wealth'). 'Shoot up' perhaps involves an allusion to usury, two of the names for which mean properly multiplication (*marbith, tarbith*). Comp. the somewhat different meaning in xlix. 17.

12, 13 **God hath spoken once.** 'Once' and 'twice' in parallel clauses mean 'again and again' (Job xxxiii. 14, xl. 5). Others render, 'One thing has God spoken; these two have I heard.' The writer claims for himself an assured know-

ledge of certain fundamental truths, produced by the divine Spirit. A similar claim is made by another psalmist (lxxxv. 9). Both writers do but follow the example of the 'wise men' (see Job iv. 16, and comp. *Job and Solomon*, pp. 43, 186), one of whom even maintains that divine revelations are vouchsafed to all who are willing to receive them (Job xxxiii. 14-16; comp. Joel ii. 28, 29). On the ground of this claim the writer once more proclaims the old and ever-precious truth that absolute power belongs only to God, but supplements it directly by a less generally recognised truth that the God who reveals Himself in Israel is also essentially kind, that instead of crushing frail man for his 'lapses' (xix. 12) He will reward him according to his work, i.e. in proportion to his honest endeavours to serve God. 'Lovingkindness' is that gracious quality which knits together the members of a community and the parties to a covenant; it is therefore not inconsistent with 'justice;' indeed, it is one form of justice. Such a quality in its highest degree alone can unravel the tangled skein of human responsibility, and determine how much in each human life is the 'work' of the man, and how much that of other members of the community. Therefore it is that we read in v. 13, 'Thine, Jehovah, is lovingkindness.' The psalmists tend to resolve morality into love, as Plato into justice.

PSALM LXIII.

'**HEIMWEH** nach dem Dienst Gottes' (Julius Hammer). The circumstances described remind us partly of Ps. lxi.; comp. also Pss. xlii., xliii.

- 2 Jehovah, thou art my God; earnestly do I seek thee;
my soul thirsts for thee, my flesh pines for thee
in a dry and thirsty land where no water is;
- 3 In such wise do I long for thee, in the sanctuary
to behold thy power and glory.
- 4 For thy lovingkindness is better than life itself;
(therefore) my lips shall praise thee.

- 5 So will I bless thee while I live,
and lift up my hands in thy name.
- 6 My soul is satisfied as with marrow and fatness,
and with mirthful lips doth my mouth sing praise.
- 7 When I call thee to mind upon my bed,
in the night watches do I meditate upon thee.
- 8 For thou hast been my help,
and in the shadow of thy wings can I shout for joy.
- 9 My soul clings fast after thee :
thy right hand upholds me.
- 10 As for them, they seek my soul to destroy it :
they shall enter into the nether world.
- 11 They shall be given up into the grasp of the sword ;
they shall be the portion of jackals.
- 12 But the king shall rejoice in Elohim ;
everyone that swears by him shall glory :
for the mouth of them that speak lies shall be stopped.

2 The psalmist's whole nature (see on xvi. 9) longs for the sanctuary ; comp. lxxxiv. 3, and for the figure of thirsting, xlii. 2. The word rendered 'pines' occurs here only (Symm., *ἰμείπεται*).—**In a dry and thirsty land**, &c. It is tempting to render (with Pesh.) 'as a dry and thirsty land' (properly 'in the manner of . . . ;' comp. xxxvii. 20). The image produced is a fine one, and this view has the support of cxliii. 6 *b*, which is clearly an imitation of our passage. But the later psalmist was not bound to copy the exact phrase of his original, and indeed began the line in a way which necessitated continuing 'like a thirsty land.' On the other hand, the ordinary rendering in lxiii. 2 seems favoured by a somewhat parallel passage in a cognate psalm (see lxi. 3). The region in which the psalmist is seems to him at the very end of the world, seems to him dry and barren, because of his spiritual privations. It is just the opposite of lxxxiv. 7, where the psalmist probably means that hot, parched valleys appear full of delicious fountains to those who have a joyous trust in Jehovah.

3 **In such wise**, i.e. with such eager longing.—**Do I long for thee**. Or, 'have I longed for thee,' viz. in former times when I had the privilege of worship in the sanctuary. But there is no reason for explaining the time-reference otherwise than in *v.* 2, and the analogy of xlii. 3 pleads strongly for the view that the poet here expresses bitter regret at his absence from the temple. The text-reading is rendered, 'So have I gazed at thee ;' against which, see crit. note.—**In the sanctuary**. Because there, in happier days, 'service high and anthem clear' could 'bring all heav'n before mine eyes.'—**To behold**, i.e. to realise (xxvii. 4). The temple being the citadel and throne of the Most High.

4 Thus far we are reminded of Pss. xlii., xliii. But here the resemblance ceases. In that psalm it is only by a painful effort that the hope is formed of praising God at some future day ; but here the lips of the psalmist are opened at once for praise. How is this? Evidently this poet has had a deeper experience than the other. Severed though he is from the material

sanctuary, his heart has become a temple of praise. Much as he loves the temple, he knows that God's name is not confined to the 'holy mount,' and that He can be worshipped even in a dry land; he has solved the enigma of xxvii. 4. He knows that God's lovingkindness is not of fitful operation, but follows him wherever he goes (xxiii. 7), and in this knowledge his heart becomes a temple of praise. He forgets all that is painful in his situation, and remembers only what God is permanently and essentially. Hence he continues, **For thy lovingkindness, &c.** God's 'power and glory' are at the disposal of His 'lovingkindness.' It is only or chiefly to intensify the sense of God's lovingkindness, which is 'better than life itself' (see on xvii. 14), that the psalmist longs so much to see His power and glory in the sanctuary. But he already has in no slight degree that happy consciousness, and so *v.* 4 *a* becomes the justification of *v.* 4 *b*, and the psalm takes a new turn. We can now understand the transition from the melancholy of the first to the ecstatic joy of the second stanza.

5 **So will I bless thee,** i.e. in thankful recognition of Thy love. ('So' = accordingly, as lxi. 9.) — **While I live.** Lit., 'in my lifetime.' Lagarde would emend this

into 'in a dry land.' It is true that in *v.* 4 *a* the psalmist *seems* to be speaking in the spirit of R. Baxter:

Lord, it belongs not to my care
Whether I die or live

There is an inconsistency in continuing 'in my lifetime;' but such inconsistencies are frequent in the psalms, and show the sincerity of the authors.

6 **As with marrow and fatness.** There was perhaps a strong sensualism in the idea of being a 'guest of God' (at sacrificial feasts) formed by the Phœnicians (comp. on *v.* 5); 'marrow and rich altar-steam' (Keble) was something to be desired for its own sake. But to the psalmists, as well as to the author of Isa. xxv. 6, the most exquisite delights were not those of the lower man, though described in sensuous language.

10 Like Savonarola, and like the Scotch Covenanters, the psalmist has no sense of any incongruity between deeply spiritual musings and vehement denunciations of his enemies. *His* enemies are those who would frustrate God's purposes for Israel. — **The nether world.** See lxxxvi. 13 (note), lxxxviii. 7.

12 *a* This one line devoted to the king is strange (contrast lxi. 7, 8). In *b*, **by him** certainly means 'by Jehovah' (lxiv. 11).

PSALM LXIV.

FRESH complaints and anticipations of a great turn of events—these latter expressed in the tone of prophecy (see on *vv.* 8–10).

- 2 Hear my voice, Elohim, in my complaint :
guard my life from fear of the enemy.
- 3 Hide me from the conspiracy of the ungodly,
from the throng of them that work wickedness ;
- 4 Who have whet their tongue like a sword,
and stretched their arrow—a bitter speech,
- 5 That they may shoot in their hiding-places at the blameless,
suddenly shoot at him, and not be afraid.
- 6 They fix their choice upon an evil purpose,

they discourse of hiding snares,
they ask who looks at them.

7 They think out acts of injustice, [and say,]
'We have accomplished a well thought out thing,'
and the inward part of each one [is unsearchable],
and the heart [of every one] is deep.

8 But *God* shall shoot at *them* with an arrow ;
suddenly shall they be wounded.

9 * * * * *
so that all that look upon them shall shake the head ;

10 And all men shall fear and shall declare God's work,
and shall understand his operation.

11 The righteous shall rejoice in Jehovah, and take refuge in him,
and all the upright in heart shall glory.

4, 5 Comp. lv. 22, lvii. 5, lix. 8, and (for *v.* 5) x. 8, lv. 20 (end).—**At the blameless.** (Heb. *tām*.) Another rendering is possible. Jacob the tent-dweller is called *tām*, in distinction from Esau the roving hunter (Gen. xxv. 27). 'Blameless' in the sense of 'honest' this cannot mean (see Ewald, *History*, i. 352) ; 'friendly' is not unsuitable, and the same rendering is admissible here. On the possible Arabic affinities of *tām*, see Delitzsch on Job i. 1.

7 The words supplied in brackets are required either for sense or to produce symmetry. With 7 *c*, *d* comp. Jer. xvii. 9, 10.

8-10 **But God shall shoot, &c.** Lit., 'And (or, so) God hath shot at them,' and so on. That which is here described is historically future, but past in the language of faith.

Punishment, the effect, is already latent in sin, the cause. Comp. xciv. 22, 23.

9 *a* Can the text be correct? The easiest rendering is, 'So shall they against whom their tongue was made them to stumble,' but the mention of human instruments of punishment is not in harmony with the context. The only alternative is, 'So they shall be made to stumble, their own tongue [i.e. the fate which they imprecated upon others] coming upon them ;' but this is harsh in the extreme. The middle word in the Hebrew may be corrupt ; we might correct, 'So shall the mischief of their own tongue bring them to ruin' (comp. cxl. 10 *b*), but this is not quite satisfactory. Comp. 9 *b* with lii. 8.

11 Comp. lviii. 11, lxiii. 12.

PSALM LXV.

A SONG of praise, composed in the spring, when the 'pastures were already green, the 'meadows' clothed with flocks, and the 'valleys' covered with swelling corn. Not long before, a great national deliverance had probably occurred, but this is not directly mentioned. The most prominent blessings in the psalmist's mind are the early and the latter rain.

- 2 Meet for thee, Elohim, is praise in Zion,
and unto thee let the vow be performed.
- 3 O thou that hearest prayer,
unto thee may all flesh come.

- 4 Manifold guilt is too strong for me :
our transgressions—vouchsafe to cancel them !
- 5 Happy is he whom thou choosest and causest to approach,
that he may abide in thy courts :
fain would we have our fill of the goodness of thy house,
even of thy holy temple.
- 6 In terrible acts of righteousness dost thou answer us,
O God of our salvation ;
thou confidence of all the ends of the earth,
and of the regions afar off :
- 7 Who establishes the mountains by his force,
being girded with might :
- 8 Who hushes the roaring of the seas,
the roaring of their billows, and the tumult of the peoples ;
- 9 So that upon those who dwell at the ends comes fear at thysigns,
the sources of morning and evening thou fillest with ringing
cries.
- 10 Thou hast visited the land and given her abundance,
greatly enriching her ;
with God's full river thou didst prepare their corn.
- 11 For right well dost thou prepare her,
drenching her furrows, smoothing down her ridges,
softening her with showers, blessing all that springs of her
- 12 Thou hast crowned the year of thy goodness,
and thy chariot-tracks drop with richness,
- 13 The pastures of the wilderness drop (therewith),
and the hills are girt with dancing joy.
- 14 The meadows are clothed with flocks,
and the valleys are covered with corn ;
they shout for joy ; yea, they sing.

2, 3 Observe how closely prayer and praise are connected. Men are coming to see that these are the truest sacrifices (see on l. 14, 15), and since 'prayer' includes 'praise' (see on xlii. 9, Acts xvi. 25) the temple may be called by a kindred writer 'a house of prayer for all peoples' (Isa. lvi. 7). Comp. on lxxxiv. 5.—**Meet for thee.** So Ewald, Hitzig (formerly), Grätz, and Bickell (with Sept.); comp. xxxiii. 1, and see crit. note. The text has, 'Unto thee (or, towards thee) silence (or, expectant resigna-

tion) is praise;' or, '... is resignation (and) praise.' The former rendering gives a fine but an unbiblical sense; in the latter, 'resignation' seems out of place (*dūmiyyāh* should precede not accompany praise; see Ps. lxii.)—**In Zion.** See note on next verse (end).

3 **May all flesh come.** An aspiration after the time of which Isaiah prophesied in ii. 2, 3; comp. Jer. xvi. 19, Isa. lxvi. 23, Ps. xxii. 28, lxxxvi. 9. The answers to prayer (i.e. supplication) of which Israel is abundantly conscious fill

the psalmist with a longing that all mankind may have recourse to the same divine Friend. That such a longing is in his mind we can see from the second part of *v.* 6 (comp. also *v.* 9). We have therefore no occasion to limit the reference of 'all flesh' to the people of Israel (with Ewald and Hitzig). We might, however, with most critics, render 'doth all flesh come,' or interpret 'may come' in this sense. The most illuminated minds of Israel were in fact so absorbed in the prophetic ideas that they now and then treat spiritual germs as if full-grown plants, and idealize the religious condition of the world (see especially Mal. i. 11, 'my name is great among the nations, and in every place incense is offered unto my name and a pure offering'). In this case, what is the connexion of this verse with *v.* 2? Surely this—that though God is the general Father, yet in a special sense he is the Father of Israel (*c.* 3; comp. *v.* 1), and that though 'all flesh' can everywhere approach God, yet there are some whom He takes by the hand and causes to draw specially near to Him in Zion. As Tholuck boldly expounds, 'All prayers, even those which men direct to fictitious deities, are known to the true God; and yet truly spiritual sacrifices 'the Lord receives in Zion as nowhere else upon earth.'

4 **Manifold guilt.** Lit., 'matters of guilts.' The colourless word 'matters' seems chosen designedly. There is an emphasis on the plural form—the two plural nouns together strongly mark the variety of the sins spoken of; comp. the solemn repetition of 'all' in Lev. xvi. 21. The same idiom occurs in cv. 27, cxlv. 5. The psalmist is oppressed by his representative character. He speaks for the nation, and the national sins in their manifoldness and separate individuality weigh down his spirit: he knows that neither he nor the nation nor

(really) the high priest can atone for them. But though this is the sad truth (*v.* 4 is virtually a hypothetical sentence), he can ask the God who answers prayer to cancel them, and with simple faith he passes into another strain.

5 To whom does this μακαρισμός refer? To the 'house of Levi,' or to the whole 'house of Israel' (cxxxv. 19, 20)? The expressions in the first line may seem to suggest the former (comp. Num. xvi. 5, xviii. 22, Deut. xxi. 5). But the unpriestly tone of *v.* 2 and *v.* 4 favours the view that the church-nation of Israel is meant, which is described in Ex. xix. 6 as ideally a 'kingdom of priests and a holy nation' (comp. lxxiii. 1). By the 'temple' and its 'courts' the psalmist means (see on xxvii. 4), not merely the temple 'in Zion' (*v.* 2), but also that spiritual temple of which the psalmist has conceived the idea while using to the full the means of grace provided for him in the visible sanctuary. On the other hand, by 'the goodness' (i.e. the good things) of God's house he cannot mean in any degree the meats of the sacrificial feasts; he refers to the blessings common to all the true Israel, as well those of the material as those of the spiritual order. Comp. xxxvi. 9, lxxiii. 6.

6 Here the special thanksgiving begins. Again and again, when Israel 'cries unto Jehovah in his distress' (cvii. 13), He answers him in acts not less terrible than righteous (note the double accusative). For **terrible**, we might substitute 'fearful-glorious'; for, as Dathe remarks, the phrase describes those deeds at which the ungodly are affrighted, but for which the godly, whose good they promote, give praise to God. See on cxxxix. 14.—**Of** (lit., in = in accordance with) **righteousness**. God must be faithful to his acknowledged principles, which include interposition for his covenant-people (comp.

¹ See Kuenen, *Hibbert Lectures* for 1882, p. 181, and cf. my art. 'The Invisible Church in Hebrew Prophecy,' in *Monthly Interpreter*, May 1885, pp. 77-79.

Isa. xlii. 6, xlv. 13).—**Thou confidence**, &c. The wonderful history of Israel (such is the faith of the psalmist) has impressed, or is sure to impress, the nations outside first with fear (*v.* 9) and then with confidence (cf. xl. 5).—**The regions afar off**. The phrase occurs in Isa. lxxv. 19; cf. also Isa. xxxiii. 13. The text-reading is, 'and (of) the sea of 'hose who are afar off.'

7; 8 The God of nature and the God of history are one. There may be also a secondary symbolic reference, the mountains suggesting the colossal power (cf. Isa. xli. 15), and the seas the restless character of the world-empires which so often troubled Israel (xlvi. 4, 7, Isa. xvii. 12-14).

9 The reverent awe and enthusiastic delight of spectators at the downfall of tyrannical powers.—**The ends**, viz. of the earth (*v.* 6); in other words, east and west, **the sources** (lit., places of outgoing) **of morning and evening** (a zeugma which is illustrated by 'the two orient,' Korán, xliii. 37). Morning and evening are here synonyms for the rising and the setting sun (cf. introduction to Ps. xxiv.)

10, 11 Again a change of key. God also 'answers' his people by the gifts of the soil. Lovingly the poet describes the 'early rain' or first showers of autumn, without which the operations of husbandry cannot begin.—**Visited** means 'taken notice of' (see on viii. 5, xxxiii. 18, and cf. Ruth i. 6).—**With God's full river**, i.e. with water from heaven; cf. the Talmudic but doubtless also primitive Hebrew expression 'field of Baal,' i.e. 'a field nourished, not by springs, but by rain' (*Isaiah*, ii. 295). Schultens quotes a passage from the (Arabic) history of Tamerlane (p. 82), 'When the river of God comes, the river Isa ceases.' A mythic conception lies at the root of the Hebrew phrase, as the Targum already suggests by paraphrasing, 'from the cask (or cistern) of God which is in heaven' (cf. Job xxxviii. 37, 'the bottles of

heaven' = the clouds). The rain was naïvely regarded in the earliest times as coming from the heavenly ocean (see on civ. 3), which was behind the 'doors' and 'lattices' of heaven (lxxviii. 23, Gen. vii. 11). The word for 'river' (*péleg*) is remarkable; generally it means 'conduit' or 'canal,' but here, as in xlvi. 5, 'river' is evidently the sense required. A *divine* stream, though not of the same character, being referred to, a peculiar word is chosen in both passages (see crit. note). And truly the contrast between the state of the soil before and after the early rain, might well suggest the expression, 'a stream of Elohim.'

11 **For right well**, &c. In the text these words close the preceding verse, but how awkwardly! There is a play upon the word *kēn*, which may signify either 'so' or 'right' (the latter meaning suggested here by the word 'prepare' or 'righten'). 'So' would mean 'so generously.'—**All that springs of her**. The Heb. *šémakh* being almost always used collectively (see on Isa. iv. 2).

12-14 If the 'early rain' might be called a 'river of Elohim,' the 'latter rain' and its consequent blessings well deserved to be called 'the crowning of the year.' The development of the grain stands almost still in January and February; in the months of March and April, when the 'latter rain' falls, it has to become fully ripe. How eagerly the Israelites looked out for this precious gift, may be seen from Job xxix. 23, Prov. xvi. 15, Jer. iii. 3, Zech. x. 1, as well as from the landscape-picture in *vv.* 12-14, which is suffused with emotion, though, remarkably enough, the emotions of grateful Man are transferred to the hills and valleys which he cultivates. The only figure indeed besides the quiet sheep is that of One who drives through the land in His chariot, not as a man of war (as Hab. iii. 12), but to scatter **richness** (lit., fatness) on the waiting earth (Hos. ii. 21). Poets make their own myths when

they do not find them. No doubt the meaning is that the 'latter rain' had fallen in abundance when the corn was coming into ear (Deut. xxxiii. 26, quoted by Del., is parallel rather to lxviii. 33). The **valleys** (*v.* 14) are 'the long broad sweeps sometimes found between parallel ranges of hills' (*'ēmeq*).—**They shout for joy** reminds us of lyric

passages in II. Isaiah (e.g. xlv. 23, xlix. 13; cf. also Ps. xcvi. 11, 12, xcviii. 7, 8). Some indeed would supply 'men' as the subject; but Virgil at least would not have been shocked at making nature 'sing' (see *Ecl.* v. 62). There are surely scenes in which it is not enough to speak of 'smiling fields.'

PSALM LXVI.

A LITURGICAL psalm. It is uncertain, however, whether the sacrifices spoken of are offered in the name of the people by the high priest or some other leader, or by an individual in his own name (see *v.* 16). In the latter case, as there is no historic setting to *vv.* 13–20, we must suppose the psalm to be intended for any individual who might bring the offering which he had vowed to the temple. The exordium echoes (we might say, popularises) the prophetic idea of the worldwide significance of Israel's history. Passages parallel to it, in form and contents, will at once suggest themselves (e.g. xcviii. 4 for *v.* 1; Prov. xv. 3 for *v.* 11 *b*; Isa. xlvi. 10, Jer. ix. 7, Zech. xiii. 9, Mal. iii. 3 for *v.* 10).

- 1 Shout ye merrily to Elohim, all ye upon earth,
- 2 Make melody unto the glory of his name,
ascribe glory to praise him.
- 3 Say unto God, 'How terrible are thy works!
so great is thy strength that thine enemies cringe unto thee.
- 4 All upon the earth shall worship thee,
and make melody unto thee, make melody unto thy name.'
- 5 Come ye and see the works of God,
how terrible he is in his doing toward the sons of men.
- 6 He turned the sea into dry land;
they went on foot through the river—
there let us rejoice in him.
- 7 He rules by his might for ever;
his eyes survey the nations:
let not the rebellious deal so proudly.
- 8 O bless our God, ye peoples,
and make the sound of his praise to be heard,
- 9 Who hast set our soul in life,
and hast not suffered our foot to waver.
- 10 For thou, O God, hast proved us:
thou hast refined us, as silver is refined.
- 11 Thou broughtest us into the dungeon;
thou laidest upon our loins a crushing weight.
- 12 Thou didst cause mortal men to ride over our heads;

we went through fire and through water,
but thou broughtest us out into a place of liberty.

- 13 I will go into thy house with burnt offerings,
I will render unto thee my vows,
14 Such as escaped from my lips,
and my mouth did utter, when I was in straits.
15 Burnt offerings of fatlings will I offer unto thee,
with the sweet savour of rams ;
I will sacrifice bullocks with goats.
16 Come ye, hearken, and let me rehearse, all ye that fear God,
that which he did for myself.
17 I cried unto him with my mouth,
and a lofty hymn was (already) under my tongue.
18 If I have intended iniquity in my heart,
the Lord will not hear ;
19 But verily God has heard,
and been attentive to the sound of my prayer.
20 Blessed be Elohim,
who has not driven [from him] my prayer,
[nor withdrawn his kindness] from me.

3 **How terrible.** Cf. cxlv. 6. The paraphrase 'fearful-glorious' (see on lxv. 6) is very suitable here, and in *v.* 5 (cf. 6).

5 **Toward the sons of men.** And yet the example given in *v.* 6 is a deliverance of Israel. But Israel is beginning to feel himself the elder brother of 'the nations;' indeed, it is 'the nations' who are now addressed in sympathetic language.

6 If the text is correct, this seems the only intelligible rendering. The poet implies the solidarity of his people in all generations (cf. cxxxii. 6, 7, Josh. v. 1, Hos. xii. 5; in the two last passages, however, the pronoun is uncertain). That the rendering adopted is grammatically possible, there is no reasonable doubt; see Delitzsch, and cf. Driver, *H. Tenses*, § 54. A.V. requires us to suppose that the speaker as it were ecstatically transports himself and his fellow-Israelites to the period of the Exodus, and speaks with the lips of the

earlier generation. In such a context I fail to realise this as possible; xxxvi. 13, cited by Perowne, is a very questionable analogy.

7 **His eyes survey** (as Prov. xv. 3), as from a watch-tower; cf. on xliv. 24.—**The rebellious.** See on lxxviii. 7.

11 **Into the dungeon.** A figure for the depressed consciousness of a conquered people. Cf. Isa. xlii. 23, 'hidden in houses of restraint.'

12 **Mortal men.** That the poet is, if not etymologising, yet playing upon the word 'enōsh, can hardly be doubted (see on viii. 5). Elsewhere Israel is encouraged by the thought of the mortal nature of its tyrants (Isa. li. 12); here, however, it is the ignominy of servitude to be tyrannised over by the creatures of a day. Israel's true king is divine. Comp. 'Arise, Jehovah; let not mortal man be too strong' (ix. 20; see note).—**Fire and water** are images for the varieties of deadly peril (cf. Isa. xliiii. 2).—**Into a**

place of liberty (cf. xviii. 20). The text-reading is, 'into abundance' (same word in xxiii. 5).

14 **Such as escaped . . .** Extorted by the necessity of the moment, like the vow of Jephthah (Judg. xi. 35, 36, same word).

15 **Sweet savour.** Whether this rendering favours radical Pentateuch criticism or not, it is the only natural one. See my note on Isa. i. 13, and comp. Wellhausen, *Prolegomena*, p. 67, and Dillmann's obscure and, I fear, prejudiced note on Deut. xxxiii. 10.

16 Is this the address of an individual to the Jewish church at large? or that of a representative Israelite to those who fear God in all lands? If in any sense this part of the psalm has a national reference, *v.* 19 with its declaration of innocence suggests that it was written at the same time as Ps. xlv.

17 Such was the speaker's faith

that a **lofty hymn** (cf. cxlix 6) to a prayer-hearing God had all but risen to his lips (see on x. 7). But the text may be in disorder. Would not such a striking idea have required a couplet for itself?

18 **If I have . . . will not hear.** Not, 'If I had . . . would not have heard.' It is a general proposition, 'My prayers will be ineffectual, unless my heart is pure.' Then in the next verse the speaker applies this theory to the case of his own recent prayer. God has heard me; therefore I am free from 'great transgression.' He is content with hinting this inference, which puzzled the quaint Fuller. Contrast Job's complaint, 'My prayer is pure; yet God treats me as an enemy' (Job xvi. 17; cf. 9).

20 The text has only, 'who has not withdrawn my prayer and his lovingkindness from me.' But see crit. note.

PSALM LXVII.

A HARVEST-HOME hymn in the widest sense. Looking upon the corn, now ready to be reaped, the poet thinks of the spiritual harvest, when Jehovah shall be king over all the earth. It is no compulsory empire which he has in his mind; the sight of Israel's blessedness will gently bring the other nations to the true religion. Will Israel's blessedness one day really attain such potency? Yes; each fruitful season is a guarantee of this. Comp. the lovely picture of the 'Messianic' period, when spiritual and material blessings shall be poured out in equal abundance, in lxxxv. 11-13. The psalm consists of three strophes, the second and third of which have an *initial* refrain (see on Pss. lix., lxii.) In *v.* 2 *a* and *b* there is an echo of the first two parts of the priestly blessing (Num. vi. 24, 25).

- 2 Elohim be gracious unto us and bless us,
and cause his face to shine upon us,
- 3 That thy way may be known upon earth,
even thy salvation among all nations.
- 4 Let the peoples give thanks unto thee, O God;
let the peoples all of them give thanks unto thee.
- 5 Let the nations rejoice with ringing cries,
for thou wilt judge the peoples in equity,
and lead the nations upon earth.
- 6 Let the peoples give thanks unto thee, O God,
let the peoples all of them give thanks unto thee.

- 7 The earth has yielded her increase ;
 may Jehovah, our own God, bless us.
- 8 May God bless us ;
 and let all the ends of the earth fear him.

PSALM LXVIII.

A PATRIOTIC and religious ode of wondrous range and compass and in the grandest style. So full is it of reminiscences of other psalms (not to claim *allusions* to Habakkuk and II. Isaiah), that we cannot help referring it to the post-Exile period. But to which part of that period of periods? It were hopeless to justify a single view here ; much less to examine the many theories which have been proposed, and which make Ps. lxxviii., in Reuss' words, 'ein Denkmal exegetischer Noth und Kunst.' Elaborately artistic as the poem may be, how strong is the lyric emotion which pervades the whole, and makes it live ! All the feelings, recollections, hopes, and anticipations of the age have found in it an adequate expression. Bishop Alexander has given a fine rendering of this psalm, in the variable measure of an English 'ode,' in his *Poems* (1886) ; which, however, I was unable to consult. Marot's version, beginning, 'Que Dieu se montre seulement,' was known among the Huguenots as the 'song of battles,' and the *Ex-surgat Deus* was chanted by Savonarola and his brother-monks as they marched to the trial of fire in the Piazza of Florence.

- 2 Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered,
 and let them that hate him flee before him.
- 3 Like a drift of smoke, so mayest thou drive them :
 as wax melts before the fire,
 so perish the ungodly at the presence of Elohim !
- 4 But let the righteous rejoice and triumph before Jehovah,
 let them be merry and joyful.
- 5 Sing unto God, make melody unto his name,
 cast up a way for him who rides through the deserts,
 bless his name, and triumph before him—
- 6 Who is a father of the orphans, and an advocate of the widows,
 even God in his holy mansion,—
- 7 God, who makes the desolate to return home,
 who brings forth the prisoners into prosperity,
 the rebellious notwithstanding dwell in a parched land.
- 8 O God, when thou wentest forth before thy people,
 when thou marchedst through the wilderness,
- 9 The earth did quake, the heavens also dropped,
 at God's presence yonder Sinai [shook],
 at the presence of Jehovah, Israel's God.
- 10 A liberal rain didst thou shed, O God,
 upon thine inheritance [so weary] and fainting,
 thou didst restore [the dry land].

- 11 Thine army dwelt therein :
in thy goodness, O God, thou preparedst for the poor.
- 12 The Lord gives the word :
the heraldesses of victory are a great host.
- 13 Kings of hosts flee—they flee,
and she that has tarried at home divides the spoil.
- 14 Will ye lie among the sheepfolds ?
The wings of a dove that is covered with silver,
and her feathers with green-shimmering gold.
- 15 [For full is our land of spoil,]
when Shaddai scatters kings therein,
[as the snow, when] it snows on Salmon.
- 16 A mountain of Elohim is the mountain of Bashan,
a mountain with peaks is the mountain of Bashan.
- 17 Why look ye askance, ye mountains with peaks,
on the mount which God has desired to dwell in ?
yea, Jehovah will abide there for ever.
- 18 The chariots of God are myriads twice-told, thousands upon
thousands ;
the Lord hath come from Sinai into the sanctuary.
- 19 Thou hast gone up to the high mount to abide ;
O Jah, thou hast carried away captives, thou hast received gifts
among men, yea, even among the rebellious.
- 20 Blessed be the Lord !
day by day he bears us—
even the God who is our salvation.
- 21 God is unto us divine in saving acts ;
yea, unto Jehovah belong escapes from Death.
- 22 Surely Elohim will shatter the head of his enemies,
the longhaired crown of the head of him who goes on in his sins.
- 23 The Lord said, I will bring (them) back from Bashan,
I will bring (them) back from the ocean-gulfs,
- 24 That thou mayest wash thy foot in blood,
that the tongue of thy dogs may have its portion from the
enemies.
- 25 They have seen thy progress, O God,
the progress of my God, my King, into the sanctuary.
- 26 Singers went before, minstrels followed after,
in the midst of damsels playing on timbrels.
- 27 'In full choirs bless ye Elohim,
even the Lord from the fountain of Israel.'
- 28 Then went little Benjamin before,

- the chiefs of Judah in its bands,
the chiefs of Zebulun, the chiefs of Naphtali.
- 29 Command thy strength, O God ;
show thyself strong, O God, thou who (before) hast wrought
for us.
- 30 From thy temple above Jerusalem
kings shall (then) bring presents unto thee.
- 31 Rebuke thou the wild beast of the reeds,
the troop of bulls, of lords of peoples,
that rolls itself in mire for gain of money ;
scatter thou the peoples that delight in wars.
- 32 (Then) shall they come in haste out of Egypt,
quickly shall Ethiopia stretch out her hands unto God.
- 33 O kingdoms of the earth, sing ye unto God,
make ye melody unto the Lord,
- 34 (Sing) unto him that rideth through the ancient heavens of
heavens ;
behold, he uttereth his voice, and that a mighty voice.
- 35 Ascribe unto Jehovah strength which sheltereth Israel,
(unto him) whose majesty and strength are in the skies.
- 36 Terrible is Jehovah ruling from his sanctuary,
—he is the God of Israel :
Strength and mightiness he giveth to his people,
—blessed be God.

2-7 A prayer for deliverance, which almost rises into prophecy, so fervent is its emotion. Then, in calmer tones, a summons to Israel to prepare joyously for the Deliverer.

2 **Let God arise**, &c. The chant with which the ark set forward in the wilderness (Num. x. 35).

3 They shall be scattered, when God arises, like smoke-wreaths ; they shall melt like wax ; nay more (for these figures might merely signify flight, 1 Sam. xi. 11, xiv. 16), they shall perish. The **ungodly** are opposed to the **righteous** (v. 4) ; i.e. foreigners to Israelites ; see on ix. 5, lviii. 11, and cf. Hab. i. 13, ii. 4, iii. 13 (see above).

5 **Cast up a way**, as pioneers for a royal progress—an allusion to Isa. xl. 3. There, however, the 'desert' in the singular is men-

tioned ; here it is 'deserts.' No single 'desert' is referred to ; it is a characteristic of Jehovah to make royal progresses alike in the vast expanse above (v. 34), and in those great desert regions in which His people twice learned a lesson of faith in Him. When Israel is in affliction, it seems as if Jehovah had retired to the desert. He hears His people's cry, and then, as Habakkuk says, 'Eloah cometh from Teman, and the Holy One from mount Paran' (Hab. iii. 3).—**Bless his name.** The text has, 'In Jah is his name.'

6 But dare the Israelites rejoice? True, they are 'righteous' (v. 4) ; but as yet they share the fate of 'orphans' and 'widows' (x. 14 ; cf. xciv. 6). Still let them rejoice ; for God is a righteous though long-suffering judge (Luke xviii. 7, R.V.),

and, like the importunate widow in the parable, orphaned and widowed Israel shall come to her 'rights.' Jehovah 'prepared' for the 'poor' in former troubles; is he not already 'preparing' now? Is he not safe from attack himself in his **holy mansion**, and able as willing to fight for Israel (these ideas are suggested by the phrase; see on xxii. 4, xciii. 4, 5)? The heavenly and not the earthly temple is meant (Hitzig, Hupfeld, and Delitzsch); see Deut. xxvi. 15, Jer. xxv. 30, Zech. ii. 13. He looks down thence upon the children of men, and is about to speak; 'hush before him' (Hab. ii. 20, Zeph. i. 7).

7 Here type is exchanged for allegory. The psalmist looks back on the two great Returns, that from Egypt and that from Babylon. (I suppose there is no doubt that he would have regarded Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as the founders of the 'home' in Canaan; cf. Ps. cv.)

— **A parched land** is not the desert (?) of Sinai, where so many Israelites perished, but a figurative expression for a land without the spiritual and material blessings showered by Jehovah upon His faithful ones; cf. lxiii. 2c, Isa. lxxv. 11-14. 'Imprisonment' (**prisoners**) is an allegory for the manifold afflictions of 'captivity' (cf. cii. 20, and see on lxxvi. 11); hence its opposite is 'prosperity.' 'Isolation' (**desolate**) expresses the want of friendly sympathy and aid so painfully felt by the Jewish exiles and by the Maccabean patriots (see, for the expression, xxv. 16, and for the idea cii. 7, 8, xliv. 14, 17). The text-reading of line 1 is rendered, 'God setteth the solitary in families' (A.V. and R.V.; cf. cxiii. 9). This gives an excellent antithesis, but is not in perfect harmony with the context, which requires an allegorical description of the change which a divine deliverance produces in the circumstances of Israel. The 'family' of

Israel did not cease to exist when expatriated; the sentence in A.V., however fine, is not in point here. We might of course take the participle in a pregnant sense, 'brings the solitary ones home and causes them to dwell there;' but this is arbitrary. Isa. lviii. 7 (compared by Hupfeld and others) gives no help. See crit. note.—**The rebellious**, i.e. those Israelites who 'take another (god) in exchange' (xvi. 4), and shut themselves out from the 'covenant of promise' (Isa. lxxv., lxxvi.) For another use of the phrase, see v. 19c.

8-19 Is this confidence presumptuous? No; Jehovah has already given an example of his willingness and ability to save. The deliverance from Egypt is a foreshadowing of deliverances to come. The poet sketches successively the journey through the wilderness, the conquest of Canaan, and the occupation of Mount Zion by the great King.

8, 9 Amidst signs and wonders, Jehovah leads forth his people from Sinai, not (according to this picture) from Egypt, as Grill and Bertheau would have it. Comp. Deut. xxxiii. 2, Hab. iii. 3, and especially Judg. v. 4, 5, from which passage in fact these verses are freely quoted, and which also enables us to supply the indispensable word 'shook.' I have also ventured to emend 'Elohim' into **Jehovah** in v. 8c, as in xliii. 4, for the sake of sense (so Judg. v. 5).

10, 11 A poetic view of the origin of Canaan's extraordinary fertility. The storm which marked the appearance of Jehovah was not confined to Mount Sinai, and the heavy rain, endued with supernatural power,¹ transformed the parched land of Canaan into a 'garden of Jehovah.' It had not been so in the times of the patriarchs; such at least was the poet's fancy. Perhaps he even thought of Gen. xlvii. 13, where the land of

¹ Delitzsch, however, explains 'a liberal rain' of 'the abundance of gifts which God rained down upon Canaan after Israel's entrance.'

Canaan (as well as that of Egypt) is said to have 'fainted' by reason of famine. Thus a gracious God 'prepared' (cf. lxxv. 11) for His people. This seems to me the worthiest explanation, though the difficulties of the passage must be frankly confessed. **Thine army**, in particular, is a doubtful rendering; **הַיָּהוָה** only occurs once¹ in this sense, 2 Sam. xxiii. 13, and the chronicler substitutes for it the better known word **מִתְנַהֵג** (1 Chr. xi. 15). Still it is a genuine old Hebrew word, and the Karaite Arabic translator Yepheth has set a good example by rendering '*askarka* 'thine army.' Rashi and Ibn Ezra give a slightly different version (Rashi, **עֲרַתְךָ**; Ibn Ezra, **קְהֵלְתְךָ**), and from them comes A.V.'s rendering, 'thy congregation.' I should prefer 'thy family;' cf. **בְּיָי**, 1 Sam. xviii. 18; 'congregation' says too much. But 'family' is less supported than 'army,' and is less suitable as a designation of Israel. The alternative is to render 'thy living creatures' (taking the singular as a collective, or pointing as a plural). The Heb. *khayyah* (strictly, 'something alive') generally means 'a wild beast' (or 'wild beasts'), and Israel is only compared, from the point of view of its religious position, to tame animals (see on cxi. 5); in Lev. xi. 10, however, it is used in a wide sense of animals of all kinds except man, and why should it not once be used of man? To be Nature's 'dearest living creatures' is a title of honour according to Dante (*Purg.* xxix. 137, 138); why not according to the psalmist? The early Israelites looked to Jehovah for life and food and protection, and without Him the powers of the world would have crushed them. This course is at any rate not more violent than explaining *khayyah* of the quails referred to in lxxviii. 27, 28, Ex. xvi. 13. It commends itself to most of those commentators who

take *v.* 11 to refer, not to Canaan, but to the wilderness, interpreting 'thine inheritance' of the people of Israel (as xxviii. 9, lxxviii. 71, and often), and 'a liberal rain' (or, 'a rain of gifts') of the manna (cf. lxxviii. 24, Ex. xvi. 4, but see the Hebrew). Of course the words supplied in *v.* 10 *c* will have to be dropped, with this result, that **בְּהָ** 'therein' is without a feminine noun to refer to ('therein' surely cannot mean 'in the midst of Israel, thine inheritance'—Hupfeld's view). As I have said, the first view set forth above, which is substantially that of the foremost commentators, commends itself most to me, on the supposition that the text is free from material corruption. That view is not dependent on the accuracy of the words supplied (after Bickell) in *v.* 10 *b, c*. We may (if we think the construction a natural one) grammatically render, after 'thine inheritance,' 'and when it was fainting, thou hast restored it' (i.e. we may take *v.* 10 *b* to refer to Canaan, and *v.* 10 *c* to refer to Israel), and continue 'thine army (or, thy living creatures) dwelt in the desert' (taking **בְּהָ** to be the first and last letters of **בְּעֵינָהּ**—the middle letters having become obliterated; cf. Merx, *Hiob*, pp. liv.—lvi.)—**Didst restore.** Or, if this sense be confined to persons, 'didst set in order,' 'didst prepare.'

12 Here begins a scene, described in vivid historical presents, from the early wars of Israel with the kings of Canaan. But what is this **word**? Is it a creative 'fiat' issuing in victory (cf. lxxvii. 9, where **אֶמְרָךְ** = the self-fulfilling word of divine promise, but not Hab. iii. 9, which is too corrupt)? Or is it the song of victory (cf. Gen. xlix. 10 in the pointed text)? Or is it either the summons to the fray—the battle-note—or (the view to which I lean myself) the watchword (cf. Judg. vii. 18, 20)?—**The**

¹ In 2 Sam. xxiii. 11 we should certainly read **לְהִי** 'to Lehi;' see Variorum Bible.

heraldesses proclaim the news of victory in all parts of the land; or (if 'word' = song) chant an ἐπιῳδικόν like Miriam (Ex. xv. 20, 21; cf. Judg. v., 1 Sam. xviii. 6, 7), of which *vv.* 14, 15 are, as Ewald thinks, a fragment (why not also *v.* 13?)

13 **Flee—they flee.** So Judg. v. 22, 'the pransings—the pransings.'—**Divides the spoil**, viz. such as had fallen to the husband as his portion (cf. Judg. v. 30).

14 The two images in this verse are clear enough; the difficulty lies in the connexion. 'Lying among the sheepfolds' is a current phrase for a quiet country life (Gen. xlix. 14, Judg. v. 16); the brilliant hues of the dove's wings are an emblem of the rich clothing of some undetermined person or persons. The latter image is noteworthy from the keen appreciation which it displays of the effects of light. Seen in the bright glow of the sun's slanting rays, the outspread wings of a dove might fitly be described as 'yellow gold'; then, when the bird has wheeled round, and is seen against the light, they might as fitly be called 'molten silver.'¹ But what can be made of the connexion of the images? Some regard the verse as an address of the women to the men, depicting the happiness which Israel will so soon enjoy again in pastoral life (taking the initial particle **Ὡς** in a temporal sense, 'when ye lie . . . (Israel shall be) as the wings of a dove,' &c.) The objection is twofold: 1, that this particle (properly 'put the case that') never quite loses a hypothetical tinge; and 2, that if *vv.* 8, 9 are a free quotation from Judg. v. 4, 5, it is probable that this verse contains more than an allusion to Judg. v. 16. (That there is at least an allusion, will be admitted; but if there is any connexion between the two passages it is probably a closer one than is implied in this slender admission.) Grant that it *is* more than allusion,

and the initial particle becomes, not a conjunction, but an interrogative (corresponding to 'why' in Judg. v. 16), and the whole line is an exhortation to the men of those more distant parts to which the 'heraldesses' have gone (see above) to be up and doing, and join in the pursuit of the fugitives. But how, upon this view of line 1, shall we connect it with lines 2 and 3? Various answers have been given. Herder, for instance, takes lines 2 and 3 as an exclamation; one shepherd admiringly points out to another the lovely wings of the dove for want of anything better to do. How idyllic! But why did not the poet continue his quotation, adding from Judg. v. 'to hear the bleatings of the flocks'? Grill thinks that 'the wings of a dove,' &c. = 'see how they fly—the doves with gorgeous wings' (i.e. the richly clothed enemies), comparing for the construction Nah. i. 15 (Heb. ii. 1). But would this remark inspire the sluggish with zeal to join in the pursuit? Is not the dove elsewhere an emblem of swiftness in flight (lv. 7)? All such theories attempt too much. Why should there be so close a connexion between line 1 and lines 2 and 3? If line 1 is taken from one old poem why should not lines 2 and 3 (which are not a complete clause in themselves) be quoted from another, entirely unconnected with the first? For instance, they might be extracted from a song in praise of some Hebrew lady. In the Song of Songs, a bride's eyes are compared to doves' eyes (Cant. i. 15, iv. 1; comp. v. 12); why should not her dress be compared to a dove's wings transfigured by the eastern sun, according to Miss Whately's description? Of course it is possible that the song also explained how the bride got this rich dress, viz. from her heroic bridegroom (comp. Judg. v. 30, 2 Sam. i. 24). But what sense does the fragment

¹ I borrow from Miss Whately's *Ragged Life in Egypt*. Thomson's explanation (*The Land and the Book*, p. 271) shows no poetic feeling.

bear in its new position? May not the dove, to the psalmist as well as to the later poets (פִּיטוּיִים), symbolise the people of Israel¹ (see lvi. 1, title, in Heb.; lxxiv. 19, 'thy turtle-dove'; Hos. vii. 11, xi. 11; and cf. Dr. C. H. H. Wright, *Biblical Essays*, p. 45)? Through cloud and storm that 'dove' has passed, and now suns itself in the light of prosperity. There may also be an allusion to the rich garments and jewellery in the spoil, which of course were not coveted by women alone (cf. Josh. vii. 21, Judg. viii. 24, 26).

15 Still a heavy stress upon the interpreter. First of all, is **therein** correct? Is the view implied in the punctuation of בָּה to be endorsed? A mere glance at the second line shows that it is too short. Something must have dropped out, and of this 'something' בָּה may be a surviving fragment (see crit. note). To me, however, line 1 seems to read better if the received view be retained. Possibly this couplet too is more or less a quotation from an old song in which 'the land' (viz. Canaan) had just before been referred to (or else a line or two has dropped out of our psalm, just before v. 15). Next, what are we to make of the second line in the received text, which runs, 'it snowed on Salmon'? What is Salmon? There was a small mountain of this name near Shechem (Judg. ix. 48). In the Talmuds too the name occurs frequently, but, as Neubauer says,² without topographical data. May there not have been several mountains called Salmon ('dark'), either from their dark forest covering (cf. Schwarzwald) or the black rocks of their geological formation? The mountain-range of Haurân is called in Ptolemy's Geography Asalma-

nos (v.l. Alsalamos, and Alsadamnos). It is at least possible that *çalmân* = *çalmon*, and in this case v. 15 leads on naturally to the next verse. Hermon, at any rate, is not to be thought of; the name would be inappropriate, and Hermon was not really on Israelitish territory.³ But why should it be said that 'it snowed on Salmon'? The usual reply is that it is a condensed phrase meaning 'it was like a snow-fall on Mount Salmon,' alluding either to the bleached bones of the slain (cf. Virg. *Æn.* v. 865, xii. 36) or to the glistening armour which has been dropped by the fugitives (cf. Hom. *Il.* xix. 357-361). But (1) there is no parallel for such a condensed phrase in the psalm, and (2) we want some distinct reference to bones or to armour in the context. Olshausen would emend 'it snowed' into 'as the snow.' Bickell with good reason prefers to lengthen the line, so as to render 'as the snow when there is a snow-fall on Salmon.' If we may follow him in supposing a line relative to booty to have dropped out before v. 15, or to have existed in the original from which our poet quotes (see above), no further objection can be raised. Certainty is unattainable, but the probability of an approximate restoration is great.—**Shaddai.** A primitive name of God (see on xci. 1).

16 Perhaps another quotation from an old song, expressing the popular veneration for the Bashan-mountains. The original context may well have referred to Israel's victories over Og. The mountain-god was unable to protect his worshippers from Jehovah's army. **A mountain of Elohim** may mean (like 'mountains of El,' xxxvi. 7) one which seemed in a special de-

¹ See the old poem, founded on the Midrashic interpretation of the Song of Songs, in the Jewish Passover Service (De Sola's ed., p. 97, &c.), and cf. M. Sachs' lines, 'Du wirst, mein Volk, der Taube gleich genannt,' *Stimmen vom Jordan und Euphrat*, i. 91.

² Neubauer, *La géographie du Talmud*, p. 275.

³ Hermon is called in Arabic 'the Old Man's Mountain,' and 'the Snow Mountain.' The suggestion of the Haurân is Wetzstein's in an *Anhang* to Delitzsch's *Psalmen*.

gree to show forth creative power ; or possibly one which possessed divine sanctuaries (so Baudissin, *Studien*, ii. 255), like Carmel and Hermon. Grill, in fact, finds a reference to Hermon, which has at any rate three summits, and is therefore called 'Hermonim' in xlii. 7. The objection is that Hermon was not a 'mountain of Bashan' (see Deut iii. 8, iv. 48). The only 'mountain of Bashan' to which the title 'many-peaked' can be applied, is the range of the Haurân. One of its highest summits is called Guwelîn, which by an ingenious linguistic argument Wetzstein brings into connexion with the *gabhnôn* ('peaked') of the psalm, and explains as meaning 'gabled'; *har gabhnunnîn* he renders, not 'das kuppenreiche,' but 'das giebelreiche Gebirge'—a picturesque description of the crater formations of this highly volcanic region (cf. Baedeker-Socin, *Palästina*, p. 431). Cf. Aquila, ὄρη ἀφρωμένα (like ὄφρυόεις, Herod. v. 92); Duport, Βασάνοιο ὄρος πολυδειράδος.

17 Much might seem to plead for the selection of a site for the sanctuary in Bashan, whose grand mountain range had as it were been consecrated through having witnessed the early victories of Israel. But from the first Jehovah 'chose the weak things of the world to confound the mighty.'

18 By a poetic license the beginning and the end of Jehovah's 'march' (v. 8) are combined. Attended, we are told, by a vast army, He transfers his throne from Sinai to the true sanctuary. The **cha-riots** are those of the heavenly host (see 2 Kings ii. 11, vi. 17, and cf. Deut. xxxii. 2). Comp. Milton's

chariots wing'd
From th' armoury of God, where stand
of old
Myriads, &c.

The latter part of both lines is uncertain ; 'thousands of repeti-

tion' seems a forced expression, and 'into the sanctuary' makes the second line very bald. But if Ps. lxviii. is a late poem, a deviation from naturalness need not surprise us, and the baldness of line 2 is caused by the introduction of a quotation (from Deut. xxxiii. 2) which left but little space to fill up. The text, however, has, 'the Lord is among them, Sinai is in the sanctuary ;' i.e. the presence of Jehovah and His angels makes Zion a second Sinai, or, as Merrick (1766) puts it—

And Israel views within her shrine
(Blest seat of majesty divine)
The scene that erst his tribes beheld
On Sinai's mystic top reveal'd.¹

19 A fuller description of Jehovah's victory. The high mount, lit. the height, is, not heaven (against this, see on vii. 8), but Mount Zion (as vii. 8; cf. Jer. xxxi. 12, Ezek. xvii. 23, xx. 40). This favoured mount Jehovah ascends to **abide** (a word constantly used of Jehovah's earthly habitations), and carries with him the **captives** of his resistless arm, and the tribute which he received **among men**, i.e. on the field of battle. (Less probable is Ewald's view that 'captives' and 'gifts' both refer to persons, viz. to enemies who have surrendered of themselves ; cf. Isa. xlv. 14. This view requires us to render 'of men,' i.e. consisting of men.) The **rebellious** are the neighbouring peoples who have heard of Jehovah's terrible prowess. The received text has one great difficulty ; it places the words 'to abide, Jehovah' at the end of the verse (adding 'Elohim,' which is most probably due to the Elohist reviser). The last line thus becomes either, 'and even the rebellious shall abide (see Gesenius, *Grammar*, § 132, n. 1) with Jah Elohim' (i.e. as his guests ; see on v. 5), or, 'and even of the rebellious, that Jah Elohim may abide there.'

¹ Unimportant modifications of the exegesis will be caused if, with Hitzig, Ewald, and Kay, we render *bakkôdesh* 'in holiness.' Hitzig, rendering 'vom Sinai unnahbar,' compares lxxvii. 14.

The first rendering is supported by tradition (see Targ. and Theodoret's comment on the Greek), but is against the line of thought; the second entirely breaks both rhythm and logical connexion.

20-24 Here, with a benediction, a fresh strain begins. Strengthened in his faith by the foregoing pictures of the past, the poet throws himself into the interests and prospects of the present. Jehovah is not poorer in resources than of old; he will again prove his might. Indeed, he has himself promised to bring the scattered Israelites home, and show them his awful revenge on their foes.

20 **Day by day**, i.e. now as of old.—**Bears us**, as a shepherd (cf. xxviii. 9, Isa. xl. 11). So Hupfeld, with Aq., Symm., and St. Jerome. Or, 'bears our burdens' (lit. for us), as Ewald, Delitzsch, and Grill.

21 **From Death**. Buchanan finely—

Irremeabilis Orci
Unus claustra tenes

(cf. 1 Sam. ii. 6, Rev. i. 18), implying (1) that Death = Sheól, (2) that 'of Death' is the right rendering. The position of the words in the Hebrew is against (2), but (1) certainly adds force to the passage (see on vi. 5).

22 A reminiscence of Num. xxiv. 17 in its original form (see *Variorum Bible*). Cf. Judg. v. 26, Hab. iii. 13, 14. Hair, the symbol of strength and pride (cf. Deut. xxxii. 42, R.V. marg.)

23 A divine oracle either freshly granted to the psalmist (see on lxii. 12), or, more probably, quoted from some earlier work. The mountains of Bashan, with their lofty peaks, and secluded woodland glens, shall not be too high, nor the ocean-gulfs too deep, for Jehovah to bring back from them—whom? The scattered Israelites, or the fugitive enemies? Either alternative will suit the context; but the former compels us to limit the oracle to v. 23. In favour of the latter, Am. ix. 3 has

been quoted. It must be remembered, however, that the shepherd-prophet is not speaking of heathen enemies, but of Israelites who had fallen away, and might poetically be described as hiding themselves in the top of Carmel or the bottom of the sea. Looking at v. 23 by itself, one must incline to prefer the former view. 'I will bring (them) back,' if interpreted in the light of Hebrew usage, can only mean, 'I will bring my scattered people back.' (Possibly 'Bashan' may allude to some circumstances of the time of which we are ignorant.)

24 One of the grounds for the restoration of Israel announced in the foregoing oracle, according to the psalmist. Cf. lviii. 11, and see crit. note.

25-28 With an access of strong church feeling, the psalmist describes a recent religious procession, which was accompanied, as he believes, like the hosts of Israel under Moses, by Jehovah himself. There must have been something specially striking about this procession, but our ignorance of the circumstances of the psalmist's time prevents us from saying what it was. At any rate the psalmist has no doubt that it has been well-pleasing to Jehovah, and that it may rightly be called 'the progress of my God, my King, into the sanctuary.' Some think a triumphal procession is referred to; but seeing that the psalmist repeatedly supplicates a divine interposition, this can hardly be right. Nor can we evade this objection by interpreting the passage either of some ancient triumph, such as the conquest of Canaan, or of the great act of redemption for which the poet longs. Israel's part is exhaustively treated in the first part of the psalm; only four of the tribes take part in the procession; and nothing indicates that the poet has passed in prophetic ecstasy into future times.

25 **They have seen**. Who? The answer depends on what is meant by 'thy goings,' or 'pro-

gresses' (so literally). This phrase is doubtless unclear, and it is useless to explain 'obscurum per obscurius' (Hab. iii. 6). Probably, however, the plural is that of majesty, and if so, the meaning must, I think, be, not 'the progress,' or 'procession, in honour of thee' (cf. 'his song,' xlii. 9), but 'the royal progress which thou makest.' Either the ark is referred to, as carried at the head of the procession, or poetically, Jehovah is supposed to be present in some visible form—in short, there is a theophany. The spectators are of course those who are mentioned in the following verses.

26, 27 The procession is led by singers and players upon instruments (these in the post-Exile period were distinct; cf. Ezra ii. 41, 65, Neh. vii. 67), who are, as it were, set in a flower-border of damsels playing on timbrels; cf. Ex. xv. 20, Judg. xi. 34. The refrain of the song is given in *v.* 27 (like that of Miriam's, Ex. xv. 21).—**In full choirs** (*b'maghetôth*). Did the writer forget himself, since the phrase, strictly taken, means 'in the congregations,' and the poet has been describing a procession, not a temple-assembly? So thinks Prof. Land. But observe that the procession is going into the temple (*v.* 25), and when the Israelites present have followed the singers and minstrels into the sanctuary they will doubtless respond to the invitation. The words of the refrain themselves hint this, for they call for praise not only **in full choirs** (see on xxvi. 12), but **from the fountain of Israel**, which, comparing cxviii. 26, cxxxv. 21, surely means 'from the temple' (as Dr. Kay). But why was this particular phrase chosen? Because the precious water-supply connected with the temple (cf. King's handy R.T.S. monograph) had become a type of the temple itself, from which streams of living water were in the latter days to fertilise the

earth (Joel iii. 18 and parallel passages). Hence another poet makes the sacred singers chant, 'All my fresh springs are in thee' (lxxxvii. 7). Against alterations of the reading, see crit. note.

28 The general procession follows. Four tribes only take part; why only four, and why these in particular? The favourite answer is that the two former represent the south and the two latter the north. The tribe of Benjamin ('little' with reference to its size; cf. 1 Sam. ix. 21) furnished Israel's first king, and according to Deut. xxxiii. 12 and the boundaries in Josh. xviii. 16, 17, xv. 7, 8, the sanctuary lay within its limits.¹ Judah was since David the royal tribe. Zebulun and Naphtali were renowned in the psalmist's favourite national song (Judg. v. 18). This is possible; but a much more cogent explanation can be given if we may place the psalm in the post-Exile period, when Judæa and Galilee formed the two orthodox provinces. Cf. Isa. ix. 1, Sept. The **chiefs** (or, princes) are the 'elders' (Isa. iii. 14), a dignity which lingered on during and after the Exile (see on Isa. iii. 2). Each town would furnish its contingent to the procession, led by one of the 'elders.'

29-32 Sure of the unbroken connexion between Israel and its God, the psalmist is now in the right mood for prayer. Jehovah long since began his 'work;' may He but crown it with a fresh revelation of his power! May the foe be defeated and scattered (as *vv.* 2, 3)! Then will kings and distant lands do homage to Jehovah.

29 **Command**, i.e. give a charge or commission to (as xlii. 9, xlv. 5, cxxxiii. 3); see crit. note. God's 'strength' is personified, like the 'spirit of might' in Isa. xi. 2. 'Strength' is one of the leading words in *vv.* 29-36.—**Hast wrought**, used absolutely, as Isa. xliiii. 13.

30 Line 1 is so inelegant that

¹ In Ps. lxxx., however, Benjamin appears attached to two of the northern tribes.

one might be tempted to omit it, taking 'from thy temple' as a gloss upon 'thou who hast wrought for us' (cf. on *v.* 36 *a*), 'unto Jerusalem' (as we might render) as an explanatory note on line 2. It would make line 1 easier if 'from' might be emended into 'unto' (cf. the Ethiopic version). I prefer to keep the text, as this psalm is elsewhere not one of the smoothest, and to explain with Hitzig and (now, but not formerly) Delitzsch. 'Temple' (*hēkāl*) is used here (as in 1 Kings vi. 5, 17, vii. 50) of the so-called 'holy place' as distinguished from the 'holy of holies,' where Jehovah, strictly speaking, dwelt. The kings are supposed to have reached the 'holy place,' and there, like a psalmist, to 'lift up their hands towards God's holy chancel' (*dbhīr*, xxviii. 2; see note), and offer their gifts. The description **above Jerusalem** may seem at first sight weak; but if the citadel is so honoured by distant nations, a reflected brightness falls on the city below. 'Because of thy temple' (as A.V., Ewald, &c., after Symm.) is not natural in this connexion (see Zeph. ii. 11, iii. 10).

31 This verse is parallel to *v.* 29, as *v.* 32 to *v.* 30; *l.* 1 is parallel to *l.* 4, and *l.* 2 to *l.* 3. **The wild beast of the reeds** is clearly a symbol (cf. 'leviathan,' lxxiv. 14) of the warlike empire of the Nile-valley; Job. xl. 21 suggests the hippopotamus. The **troop of bulls**, i.e. of fierce kings (as the poet himself explains; see crit. note), is further described as **rolling itself in mire**, &c., i.e. condescending to the base conditions of mercenary soldiers. The view here taken of the general sense of the passage is unaffected by the uncertainty of one or two words in it. The allusion may be, as Street thinks, to the Syrians, who were 'hired' as auxiliaries by the Ammonites in David's time (2 Sam. x. 6), or, as Reuss, to the mercenaries of various

nations of the extensive empire of the Seleucids. The latter view is more natural; the image might be suggested by the 'bulls of Bashan.'¹

—**Gain of money**, if correct, will be another allusion to the Song of Deborah (Judg. v. 19). See crit. note.

32 Then shall the predictions of the Second Isaiah at length be fulfilled; Egypt and Ethiopia shall lavish their treasures on the conquering God (cf. Isa. xliii. 3, xlv. 14), and both shall hasten (see crit. note) to do this, lest a second 'rough word' of 'rebuke' (cf. Wisd. xii. 9) should prove their ruin.—**Quickly stretch out**; lit., 'make to run.' The reference is probably not so much to prayer as to the offering of gifts (cf. Isa. xviii. 7).

33–36 Full of this happy prospect, the poet calls upon all nations to join him in praiseful song, and closes with a grand thanksgiving. With *vv.* 34, 35 comp. Deut. xxxiii. 26.

34 **Unto him that rides**, &c. Jehovah's earliest 'progress' (see on *v.* 5) was through the 'heaven of heavens' (Deut. x. 14, 1 Kings viii. 27), i.e. the invisible or upper heavens, emphatically called 'ancient' like the mountains (Deut. xxxiii. 15), and indeed like Jehovah himself (Deut. xxxiii. 27; cf. Ps. lv. 20). In Gen. xix. 24 we find the very primitive phrase *παρὰ Κυρίου ἐξ οὐρανοῦ* (Sept.), with which comp. the Babylonian phrase 'the heaven of Anu'² (cf. on civ. 3).

35 **Strength which shelters Israel**. So nearly the Targum ('unto Jehovah who is over Israel'). Comp. the construction in xc. 17 *a* and *b*, also Judg. iii. 10, vi. 2. A trichotomy of the verse.

36 **Terrible**, as xlvii. 3, and often; see on lxxv. 7.—**From his sanctuary**. The Heb. has 'sanctuaries,' as lxxiii. 17, Ezek. vii. 24 (not xxi. 7), taking in the various buildings belonging to the temple, or perhaps as the 'plural of ma-

¹ Stade thinks that 'Bashan' in *v.* 23 refers to the Syrian (Seleucid) empire (*Zeitschr. f. d. alttest. Wissenschaft*, 1882, p. 293).

² Mentioned by Sayce, *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 190.

jesty.' The Targum, the Peshitto, Symmachus, and St. Jerome all render 'sanctuary.' On pronoun, see crit. note.—**Gives . . . to his people.** Cf. xxix. 11. Strength and the sanctuary connected, as xcvi. 6 b.

PSALM LXIX.

A PLAINITIVE psalm in the style of Jeremiah (cf. especially Jer. xv. 15-18), though probably much later, and reminding us also of Pss. xxii., xxxv., xl. It is composed mainly of distichs (see on *v.* 5, end), but there is no trace of any quasi-strophic divisions.

- 2 Save me, O God ;
for the waters are come in even to the soul.
- 3 I am sunk in the mire of a gulf
where there is no standing ;
I am come into watery depths,
where the tide overwhelms me.
- 4 I am wearied with my crying, my throat is burnt up,
mine eyes fail while I wait for my God.
- 5 They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of my
head,
they that are lyingly mine enemies are more in number than
my bones ;
- * * * *
- that which I had not robbed, I had to restore.
- 6 O God, thou knowest my foolishness,
and my guiltinesses are not hid from thee.
- 7 Let not them that wait for thee be shamed in me,
O Lord, Jehovah Sabáoth ;
let not those that seek thee be dishonoured in me,
O God of Israel.
- 8 For it was for thee that I bore insult,
dishonour covered my face ;
- 9 I became a stranger unto my brethren,
and an alien unto my mother's children :
- 10 Because zeal for thy house consumed me,
and the insults of them that insulted thee fell upon me.
- 11 I afflicted my soul with fasting,
and it turned to insults for me.
- 12 I made sackcloth also my vesture,
and became a proverb unto them ;
- 13 They that sit in the gate take me for their theme,
and (of me are) the ditties of the revellers.
- 14 But as for me, my prayer do I direct unto thee, Jehovah ;

- at the favourable time, O God, through thy plenteous loving-kindness,
 answer me in the steadfastness of thy salvation.
- 15 Deliver me out of the mire, that I sink not,
 let me be delivered from them that hate me, and out of the watery depths.
- 16 Let not the swelling tide overwhelm me,
 neither let the gulf swallow me up,
 and let not the pit shut her mouth upon me.
- 17 Answer me, Jehovah, for thy lovingkindness is good ;
 according to thy plenteous compassions turn towards me.
- 18 And hide not thy face from thy servant ;
 for I am in straits : answer me speedily.
- 19 Draw nigh unto my soul and release it :
 O set me free, because of mine enemies.
- 20 *Thou* knowest mine insult, my shame, and my dishonour :
 before thee are all my foes.
- 21 Insult has broken my heart,
 and very grievous [is the wound of my soul] ;
 I looked for sympathy, but there was none,
 and for comforters, but I found none.
- 22 For they gave me gall as my food,
 and in my thirst they would have me drink vinegar.
- 23 Let their table before them become a snare
 and to the tranquil let it become a trap.
- 24 Let their eyes be darkened, that they see not ;
 and make their loins continually to shake.
- 25 Pour out thy fervent ire upon them,
 and let thy hot anger overtake them.
- 26 Let their encampment be desolate,
 let there be none to dwell in their tents.
- 27 For they persecute him whom *thou* hast smitten,
 and they add to the pain of thy mortally wounded.
- 28 Put on iniquity to their iniquity,
 and let them not come into thy righteousness.
- 29 Let them be wiped out of the book of life,
 and not be written with the righteous.
- 30 And as for me, I am afflicted and sore pained ;
 let thy salvation, O God, set me secure.
- 31 I will praise the name of God with a song,
 and magnify him with thanksgiving ;
- 32 And it shall please Jehovah better than an ox,
 better than a bullock with horns and hoofs.

- 33 The afflicted, seeing it, shall rejoice ;
ye that enquire after God, let your heart revive ;
- 34 For Jehovah hearkens to the needy,
and despises not his prisoners.
- 35 Let heaven and earth praise him,
the seas, and all that moves therein.
- 36 For God will save Zion,
and build the cities of Judah ;
and men shall dwell there and have it in possession.
- 37 The seed also of his servants shall inherit it,
and they that love his name shall abide therein.

2, 3 Cf. xl. 3, lxxxviii. 6, 7, Lam. iii. 54. The imagery becomes intensely vivid in the light of travel. Dry and rocky as Palestine is, its numerous swamps, and the muddy bottoms of its rivers, must always have exacted some tribute of lives. Dr. Tristram was nearly sucked into the vast and impenetrable swamp three miles north of the lake of Huleh (*The Land of Israel*, p. 593).—**The tide**, &c. Milton's 'whelming tide' (*Lycidas*).

5 Cf. the phraseology of xl. 13 ; also of xxxv. 19, xxxviii. 20.—**Than my bones.** The text has 'they that would destroy me (are many).' The parallelism is improved by the correction (so Peshitto); a play upon words also comes into view in the Hebrew, which excuses the unusual figure, if excuse be needed (cf. Job iv. 14, Heb.)—**That which I had not robbed**, &c. This clause seems to explain 'lyingly mine enemies ;' it is very obscure, however, and, as the asterisks above indicate, a parallel and explanatory line has probably fallen out. It is true that we do find tristichs three times besides in this psalm as handed down to us, but the case in *v.* 35 is probably due to the later insertion of a line, and that in *v.* 14 is compensated by the corresponding tristich in close proximity to it (*v.* 16).

6, 7 **Thou knowest my foolishness**, &c. Scarcely = 'thou knowest that I have no foolishness' (i.e. no sin ; see on xxxviii. 6). Different views of suffering are taken

in the Psalter. One psalmist, who thought himself (i.e. Israel) innocent at first, came at length to take a very dark view of himself (see introd. to Ps. xxxii.) ; another (see xlv. 18–23) entirely denies that the sufferings of his people are a proof of their guilt. Our psalmist stands midway between them ; he admits that he must have 'hidden sins' (xix. 13, so literally), but these can be but 'lapses' known only to God, and would be perfectly venial in the eyes of men ; they neither account for nor justify the behaviour of his enemies. Nor is it only his own fortunes that are at stake ; the general religious standard will be lowered if he is given over to his enemies ; for who will 'wait for' God or 'seek' Him, if in so notable an instance trust in God be disappointed? Note the same appeal to God's omniscience in *v.* 20 ; and cf. Jer. xv. 15, xvii. 16, xviii. 23.

8–13 Cf. xlv. 14–23 ; also *v.* 8 with Jer. xv. 15, *vv.* 11, 12 with Ps. xxxv. 13, *v.* 13 with Lam. iii. 14, Job xxx. 9.

10 **Thy house**, not here quite equivalent to 'thy land and people' (cf. Hos. viii. 1), but = 'the ordering of thy household' (cf. Num. xii. 7), though no doubt the household is composed of the church-nation of Israel.

11 **I humbled my soul**, &c. So Sept., Pesh. The text has, 'I wept in (or, with) fasting my soul,' in which 'my soul' is usually explained as a 'second subject' (iii.

5, xlv. 3, lxxxiii. 19 are compared). But the Hebrew is awkward.

14 **At the favourable time.** Lit., 'at the time of favour,' i.e. when thou wilt show favour (cf. Isa. xlix. 8, lviii. 5, lxi. 2). The accents connect line 2 with line 1; but see *v.* 17, and especially cvi. 4, Isa. xlix. 8. How has it been revealed to the psalmist that this is a 'favourable time'?

21 **Very grievous, &c.** Cf. Jer. xv. 18, 'Why is . . . my wound very grievous, refusing to be healed?' See *crit. note.*

22 **Gall . . . vinegar.** Figures alone seemed strong enough to express the opposite of 'sympathy' and 'comfort.'

23-28 Passionate imprecations on the foes of Jehovah (cf. *vv.* 8-10)—less startling, indeed, than those in Ps. cii., but still requiring, for Christian readers, to be qualified by 'Father, forgive them.'

26 **Let their encampment, &c.** It is the circular encampment of a nomad tribe which is meant (see on Gen. xxv. 16)—a specimen of those persistent references to nomad life which show how early this stage began and how long it lasted with Israel. See Jer. iv. 20, x. 20.

27 **They add to.** So Sept. The text has, 'they talk (mockingly) of.'—**Thy mortally wounded,** i.e. those whom thou, for some 'unknown sin (see on *v.* 6), hast chastened.' For the form of the phrase cf. Isa. lxvi. 16, Jer. xxv. 33.

28 **Put on iniquity, &c., i.e.**

let them fall from one iniquity into another, and so have 'double guilt' and 'double destruction' (Jer. xvi. 18, xvii. 18).—**Not come into thy righteousness,** i.e. not share in the (outward) blessings which flow from Jehovah's 'righteousness'—from His will to carry out His covenant-engagements to His people.

29 For the **book of life,** or 'book of Jehovah,' which involves the idea of predestination, cf. lvi. 8 (in received text), Ex. xxxii. 32, Mal. iii. 16, Dan. xii. 1, Phil. iv. 3, Rev. iii. 5, xiii. 8, xxi. 27. The image is derived from the civic lists of the ancient Jews; see Jer. xxii. 30, Ezek. xiii. 9. On St. Augustine's violent dealing with this passage, cf. Trench, *Seven Churches of Asia*, p. 177.

32 Praise, the acceptable sacrifice (cf. on Pss. l., li.)

33 Line 2 is perhaps taken from xxii. 27. Comp. *v.* 34 with xxii. 25.

37 **His servants.** Here, as probably in xxxiv. 23, in the narrower sense = Israelites (see on cxxxv. 1). Line 2 may possibly be an interpolation. The feminine suffix in line 3, and in *v.* 37*a* and *b*, is most easily explained on this hypothesis; and an isolated tristich is improbable. If an interpolation, however, it is a happy one (cf. Jer. xxxii. 34, xxxiii. 10-13), and the fem. suffix can be explained on the analogy either of Isa. lxxv. 9*b* (so Olshausen) or of Jer. xxxvi. 23, Job xxxix. 15 (so Hitzig).

PSALM LXX.

A FRAGMENT, accidentally (as it seems from the omission of the indispensable word 'Be pleased') detached from Ps. xl. (see xl. 14-18). It contains some various readings, such as 'Elohim' twice for 'Yahvè,' and once for 'Adonai,' also 'Yahvè' once for 'Elohim.' Slightly more important is 'speed to me' (*v.* 6) for 'will care for me' (see *crit. note* on xl. 18).
where is it?

PSALM LXXI.

LARGELY made up of reminiscences of other plaintive psalms, especially xxii., xxxi., xxxv., xl. Hence a want of natural transitions, both logical

and emotional ; e.g. strong appeal in *v.* 5, supported by forcibly expressed petitions based on *xxii.* 10, 11, is greatly weakened by the preceding verses taken from *xxi.* 2-4. The psalmist speaks in the name of the nation (see on *vv.* 17, 18, 20, and cf. on *v.* 21).

- 1 In thee, Jehovah, have I sought refuge,
let me never be put to shame :
- 2 In thy righteousness deliver me and rescue me,
incline thine ear unto me and save me.
- 3 Be thou unto me an asylum-rock,
a fortified house, that thou mayest save me :
for thou art my high crag and my fortress.
- 4 My God, deliver me from the hand of the ungodly
from the grasp of the unjust and violent man.
- 5 For thou art my hope, O Lord Jehovah,
my confidence from my youth.
- 6 On thee have I been stayed from the birth ;
thou art he that loosed me from my mother's womb ;
of thee is my praise continually.
- 7 I am as a prodigy unto many,
but thou art my strong refuge.
- 8 Let my mouth be filled with thy praise,
even with thy glory all the day long.
- 9 Cast me not away in the time of old age ;
forsake me not when my strength fails me.
- 10 For mine enemies speak concerning me,
and they that watch my soul take counsel together,
- 11 Saying, ' God has forsaken him, set on,
and seize him, for there is none to deliver.'
- 12 O God, be not far from me,
my God, speed to my help.
- 13 Put to shame and dishonour be the adversaries of my soul,
let them be covered with insult and dishonour that seek my
hurt.
- 14 But as for me, I will wait on continually,
and will add to all thy praise.
- 15 My mouth shall rehearse thy righteousness,
yea, thy salvation all the day long,
for I know not the numbers thereof.
- 16 I will show the valiant acts of the Lord Jehovah ;
I will celebrate thy righteousness, even thine only.
- 17 O God, thou hast taught me from my youth up,
and hitherto have I made known thy wondrous works :

- 18 And even unto old age and grey hairs,
 O God, forsake me not ;
 until I have made known thine arm to the next generation,
 thy might unto all that are to come.
- 19 * * *
 and thy righteousness, O God, unto high heaven ;
 O thou who hast done great things,
 God, who is like unto thee ?
- 20 Thou, who hast made us see troubles great and sore,
 wilt revive us again,
 and bring us up again from the abysses of the earth.
- 21 O multiply my greatness, and turn to comfort me.
- 22 I also will give thanks unto thee with the harp,
 even unto thy truthfulness, O my God ;
 I will make melody unto thee with the lyre,
 O thou Holy One of Israel.
- 23 My lips shall ring out their joy unto thee,
 and my soul which thou hast redeemed.
- 24 My tongue also shall speak musingly of thy righteousness all the
 day long,
 because they are ashamed, because they are abashed, that
 sought my hurt.

3 I follow Sept., which agrees with xxxi. 3, and represents the original text.¹

7 **As a prodigy**, or, portent (a strong synonym for 'sign'). The word is used in Deut. xxviii. 46 with reference to Jehovah's penal justice, but here of His protecting care.

13 Cf. xl. 14, xxxv. 4, 26.

15 **The numbers thereof**. Cf. xl. 5, cxxxix. 17, 18.

17 **Taught me**, i.e. given me themes for praise (= 'put a new song in my mouth,' xl. 3). 'Trained me' (Keble) accords well with the speaker (Israel), but does not suit the immediate context so well.—

From my youth up. Cf. lxxxix. 46, cxxix. 1, Jer. ii. 2, Hos. xi. 1.

18 **Unto old age**, &c. Cf. Isa. xlvi. 4, Hos. vii. 9 ('old age whitens his hair, and he knows it not').

19 A line appears to have

dropped out, for 'thy righteousness' can hardly be 'closely attached' to 'thy might' in v. 18 (as Delitzsch). — **Who is like unto thee?** See on xxxv. 10, lxxxvi. 8.

20 **Who hast made us see**, &c. The Hebrew margin substitutes 'made me see,' &c. The Jewish critics, it appears, stumbled at the interchange of the singular and the plural pronoun, as in Jer. li. 34. The plural, however, is the key to the meaning of the surrounding singulars; it shows that the speaker represents a plurality of persons.— **From the abysses of the earth**. He does not say, nor mean, 'from the abysses of the sea' (as Hupfeld), but, virtually, from the deep places of the underworld (Sheól); see on lxxxvi. 13. *T'hôm* is best rendered, with Sept., 'abyss.' No ordinary 'deep' is meant, nor is it well to emphasize the *secondary*

¹ See Schrader, *Theolog. Studien und Kritiken*, 1868, p. 645, &c. To correct xxxi. 3 in accordance with lxxi. 3 (Burgess) is clearly wrong.

meaning 'deepness.' A great mass of rushing waters is the primary meaning ('roaring' being the root-idea). From the primeval sea which was the source of all things (in the Hebrew as in Chaldæo-Assyrian cosmogony) it was applied (2) to the ocean-stream together with the subterranean waters (e.g. xxxiii. 7, Isa. li. 10, Gen. vii. 11, xlix. 25); then (3), as in St. Ephrem (see Gesenius, *Thes.*), to any mass of waters, acquiring from its original reference to the ocean the secondary idea of depth (so xlii. 8; cf. on cvii. 26); at last, as here (4), the secondary idea becomes primary,

and the reference to water has vanished. On the third meaning, cf. the restricted sense of *yām* ('sea'), which runs parallel with the restricted sense of the Ass. *apsā* ocean (Sayce, *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 63; cf. p. 166, note).

21 **My greatness.** Or 'my majesty.' Elsewhere 'greatness' is ascribed either to God (e.g. cxlv. 3, 6) or to a king or grandee (Esth. i. 4, vi. 3, x. 2). So too Deut. iii. 24, Ezek. xxxi. 2, 18 (same word in masc. form).

24 **My tongue,** &c. See on xxxv. 28.

PSALM LXXII.

IN highly figurative language, Israel prays that his king and (through his king) himself and all other nations may receive God's best temporal (Messianic) blessings. One may suppose that here, as in Ps. xlv., the reigning king (Solomon, Uzziah, Josiah, or some other) is idealised. Did the poet long maintain this fervour of enthusiasm? We know this at least—that even if the 'vision tarried,' the kingdom of Israel was the 'heir of hopes too fair to turn out false' (Browning, *Paracelsus*). The political side of the Messianic ideal is forcibly presented to us here; we may compare in imagery as well as in ideas the first part of the fine poem preserved in 2 Sam. xxiii. The psalm ends with a distich partly perhaps modelled on the Abrahamic promise (see on v. 17), which more or less favours the view of Prof. Briggs that the psalm presents Israel's aspirations for the ideal Messianic king, typified by but distinct from the reigning monarch (*Messianic Prophecy*, pp. 137, 138).

- 1 Give the king thy judgments, O God,
and thy righteousness unto the king's son.
- 2 May he give doom to thy people in righteousness,
and to thine afflicted ones according to right.
- 3 May the mountains bear the fruit of peace to the people,
and the hills through righteousness.
- 4 May he judge the afflicted of the people,
save the children of the needy,
and crush the oppressor.
- 5 * * and live as long as shines the sun,
and the moon, generation after generation.
- 6 May he come down like rain upon the meadow;
like showers may he water the earth.
- 7 In his days may the righteous flourish,
and abundance of peace, until the moon be no more.

- 8 Let him have dominion also from sea to sea,
and from the river unto the ends of the earth.
- 9 Before him let foemen bow,
and let his enemies lick the dust.
- 10 Let the kings of Tarshish and the far countries bring presents,
let the kings of Sheba and Seba offer gifts.
- 11 Let all kings fall down before him,
let all nations do him service.
- 12 Because he delivers the needy when he cries,
the afflicted also who has no helper ;
- 13 He feels for the helpless and needy,
and the souls of the needy he saves ;
- 14 From injury and violence he releases their soul,
and costly is their blood in his sight.
- 15 May he live, and there be given him of Sheba's gold ;
and let prayer be made for him continually,
all day long let them bless him.
- 16 May abundance of corn be in the land,
upon the top of the mountains may it wave ;
[and the people]—like Lebanon be its fruit,
and may they blossom out of the city like the herb of the earth.
- 17 Be his name [blessed] for ever ;
while shines the sun, may his name have increase ;
may [all tribes of the earth] bless themselves by him,
may [all] nations call him happy.

(*Subscription to Book II.*)

- 18 Blessed be Yahveh Elohim, the God of Israel,
who alone doeth wondrous things ;
- 19 And blessed be his glorious name for ever,
and let the whole earth be filled with his glory !

Amen and Amen.

1 **Thy judgments**, i.e. judgments as righteous as thine ; the 'spirit of judgment' being a gift of God (Isa. xi. 3, xxviii. 6 ; cf. 1 Kings iii. 28).—**Unto the king's son**. An antique respect for hereditary royalty breathes in this phrase, with which comp. Mesha's words, 'My father was king over Moab thirty years, and I became king after my father,' and Ptolemy V.'s description of himself as 'immediate successor of his father' (*Records of the Past*, iv. 71).

2 **Thine afflicted ones**. Israel as a whole is thus styled (cf. ix. 13, lxviii. 11).

3 **May the mountains, &c.** Cf. lxxxv. 11, Isa. xlv. 8 (the Oriental conception of the 'bridal of the earth and sky').

5 In the text, this verse begins, 'Let them fear thee,' viz. God (as Calvin, Olshausen, Delitzsch) or the king (as Hupfeld, Hitzig, Orelli). The words interrupt the flow of speech, and the Sept. favours the idiomatic reading adopted.

Cf. *v.* 17, lxxxix. 37, 38, and see crit. note. A literal rendering would be, 'And let him prolong (his days).' The Hebrew continues, **with the sun and before the moon**, words which appear to claim eternal life for the king (see introd. to Ps. xxi., and cf. xlv. 3).

6 **May he come down**, &c. 'May he be gentle, beneficent, condescending as the rain,' &c. (cf. Hos. vi. 3).

7 Comp. the prayer for peace (or, welfare) with Isa. ix. 7*a*.

8 **From sea to sea**, &c. Apparently an allusion to Zech. ix. 10.

9 **Lick the dust**. A more extravagant way of testifying submission than 'kissing the feet' (see on ii. 12).

10 **Tarshish**, i.e. strictly Tartessus in Spain. But here 'Tarshish' only individualises the dimly known regions of the West.—**Sheba**, i.e. southern Arabia.—**Sela**, i.e. the Ethiopian island and city of Meroe.

12-14 Such blessings are the rewards of the character and previous conduct of the king, who is specially sympathetic towards the 'afflicted' (in the narrower sense?). Comp. *v.* 12 with Job xxix. 12. **Costly is their blood**, i.e. something to be rescued at all costs. An important part of the royal duties was to 'judge the poor and needy,' and if necessary to avenge their blood. Cf. on cxvi. 15 (parallel passage).

15 **May he live**, &c. This line is obscure. The subject of the first verb (granting the correctness of the rendering) is the king, for whom in the sequel prayers are offered up by the grateful 'afflicted ones.' If so, the reference to **Sheba's gold** seems strangely out of place, at

least assuming the 'afflicted' to be the donors, unless of course with Hitzig we regard the psalm as the work of an age when many of the Jews had enriched themselves by commerce. May we then with De Dieu and Delitzsch suppose the 'afflicted one' to be, not the giver, but the receiver of the treasure? This would be an unique statement, and would surely be followed by a distich developing this idea. It would be slightly more natural if 'the afflicted' were the subject of the first verb (Delitzsch, but not De Dieu); but the word 'may he live' reminds us too forcibly of the formula 'May the king live' to allow of this supposition. 'May he live' surely means, as Keble expresses it, 'O King, for ever live.' But how abruptly the exclamation comes in here! It is possible that the line is a quotation from some intercessory prayer for the king which was written by one scribe in the margin, and mistakenly incorporated into the text by another.

17 **Have increase**; a man's name being 'propagated' by his offspring.—**May all tribes**, &c. See Gen. xxii. 18, xxvi. 4, and cf. Briggs, *Messianic Prophecy*, p. 89. Observe that Sirach, like our psalmist, combines a reference to these passages and to Zech. ix. 10 (see on *v.* 8) in Ecclus. xlv. 21.—At the end of the doxology the Heb. text has, 'The prayers of David, son of Jesse, are ended' (*v.* 20), where Sept. renders *ἡ ἑλλοθὴ* by *οἱ ὕμνοι* (we need scarcely suppose the translator to have read *ἡ ἑλλοθὴ*; see on xlii. 9). Of course the note is misplaced; it should have stood at the end of a collection of 'Davidic' psalms.

BOOK III.

PSALM LXXIII.

WE are no strangers (see Pss. xxxvii., xlix.) to the problem which disturbs the psalmist, but nowhere, even in *Job*, have we found a more striking treatment of it. In his spiritual intuitions, he reminds us of Pss. xvi., xvii. (see introd.) Twenty-five sermons (the only ones published by himself) were preached by Savonarola on this congenial psalm, which so well expresses his own continual mental conflict. On its intrinsic and historical importance, cf. a fine passage in Wellhausen's *Prolegomena*, E.T., p. 506.

Except at the beginning and end, Ps. lxxiii. consists of octastichs, of which there are six groups or strophes.

- 1 Surely Elohim is gracious unto Israel,
Even to the pure in heart ;
- 2 But as for me, my feet had almost swerved,
my steps had well nigh slipped.
- 3 For I was envious at the boasters,
when I saw the welfare of the ungodly :
- 4 For torments have they none ;
sound and plump is their body.
- 5 They partake not of the travail of mortals,
neither are they plagued like other men :
- 6 Therefore pride is about their neck ;
violence covers them as a garment.
- 7 From an unfeeling heart their iniquity comes forth :
the imaginings of their mind overflow :
- 8 They mock, and speak maliciously ;
of oppression do they speak from on high.
- 9 They have set their mouth in the heavens,
and their tongue goes about in the earth.
- 10 Therefore he satisfies them with bread,
and water in abundance they drink up at their ease ;
- 11 And they say, 'How should God know ?
and is there knowledge in the most High ?'

- 12 Behold, these men are ungodly,
and secure for ever, they have won great substance.
- 13 'Surely in vain have I cleansed my heart,
and washed my hands in innocency.
- 14 And yet I was plagued all the day,
and my rebuke came every morning.'
- 15 If I had said, 'Let such be my discourse,'
I should have been a traitor to the generation of thy children.
- 16 But when I considered this, to comprehend it,
it was wearisome trouble in mine eyes ;
- 17 Until I went into the sanctuary of God,
and gave heed unto their latter end,—
- 18 Surely thou settest them in slippery places,
thou castest them down into ruins.
- 19 How are they made desolate in a moment,
swept off, undone by calamities !
- 20 As a dream when one has awaked,
so, Lord, when thou art aroused, thou wilt despise their
semblance.
- 21 For my heart was becoming embittered,
and I had a stinging pain in my reins.
- 22 I indeed was brutish and ignorant,
I was (like) the beasts toward thee.
- 23 And yet I am continually with thee ;
thou hast taken hold of my right hand.
- 24 According to thy purpose wilt thou lead me,
and afterward receive me with glory.
- 25 Whom have I (to care for) in heaven ?
and possessing thee I have pleasure in nothing upon earth.
- 26 Though my flesh and my heart should have wasted away,
God would for ever be the rock of my heart and my portion.
- 27 For behold, they that go afar from thee shall perish ;
everyone that wantonly deserts thee, dost thou clean put out.
- 28 But as for me, to be near to God is my happiness ;
I have put my trust in the Lord Jehovah
that I may rehearse all thy works.

I **Surely Elohim**, &c. 'Siest ce que Dieu est très doux,' in Marot's fine old version. The recurrence of the opening particle (יְהוָה) is characteristic of this psalm. As in xxxix. 6, lxii. 2, &c., renderings vary. I have followed Hupfeld, but Ewald, Hit-

zig, Hengstenberg, Delitzsch, and Kay prefer 'nichts als götig,' 'only good'—good in spite of appearances ; while (adopting the derived adversative sense) Jerome gives 'attamen' (cf. xxxviii. 7, Vulg.), Symmachus *πλήν ὄντως*, Calvin

'atqui.' On the latter view, we must suppose that the poet has had a sore inward struggle (cf. on lviii. 12), or interpolate mentally 'Let the air lighten and the constellations mingle,' or the like, following George Buchanan (see his fine rendering). One might also combine two senses, rendering 'But surely.'—**Even unto**, &c. A definition of the true Israel (cf. the same construction in Lam. iii. 25). The same idea of a spiritual Israel has met us in xxiv. 4-6; it points the way to the conception of 'the Servant' in II. Isaiah.

2 **My feet**, &c. There are sins of the intellect, as well as of outward practice; hence the figure of stumbling can be applied to theoretical doubts as to God's righteousness as well as to open violations of His law. In fact, there is no clear severance in the Scriptures between the moral and the intellectual life. The 'heart' is the central organ of both.

3 **I was envious**, &c. Or, 'I was incensed;' envy, jealousy, zeal, indignation, are equally well expressed by this word (root-meaning, to be deep red). The 'boasters' are noisy, self-important men (see on v. 6); comp. *vv.* 8, 9.

4 See crit. note. The text-reading mentions the happy deaths of the wicked too soon.

7 **From an unfeeling heart**, &c. The character of the heart determines that of the actions (Matt. xii. 35). Picturesque as the received reading may be (see A.V.), it must be rejected as against the parallelism. See on xvii. 10.

8 **From on high**, as if they were gods (Isa. xiv. 13); lit., 'from the (heavenly) height.' The expression is paraphrased in *v.* 9 *a*.

10 **Therefore**, &c. In a previous quatrain, the poet ascribed the pride of these men to their immunity from trouble. Here he reverses the relation; the pride of these 'loud boasters' is represented as the cause why the Governor of the world gives them all material good things. His confusion of mind ex-

presses itself in his phraseology. [The received text runs, 'Therefore he turns his people hitherward, and water in abundance is greedily drunk up by them,' or, as the Hebrew margin, 'Therefore his people turns,' &c. 'His people' may mean those who are disposed to follow such a one as has been described; 'water' may be a figure for pernicious teaching; comp. *Pirke Abboth* i. 11. But the phraseology, especially in the first line, is unnatural.]

11, 12 *V.* 11 contains the language not of more or less unwilling sceptics, but of obstinate sinners (see *x.* 4, 11, 13). '*El* (rendered **God**) and '*Elyôn* (the most High) are both very primitive divine names (see on lxxviii. 35, and cf. on vii. 18). The next error is the emphatic close of the previous description, summing up its main facts. In form it reminds us of the Book of Job (see Job v. 27, viii. 19, 20, xiii. 1).

13, 14 A speech such as might have escaped the lips of the poet himself, and expressing at any rate the inference which he had been tempted to draw from the contrast between the prosperity of the ungodly and his own successive misfortunes. The characteristic 'surely' (see *vv.* 1, 18) of itself suggests this. *V.* 15, however, clearly proves that it was only a temptation.—**Surely in vain**. Or, as Kay, 'All in vain' (or simply, 'To no purpose;' comp. lxii. 2, 6, 10); Hitzig, 'Eitel für nichts.'—**Washed mine hands**, &c. See on xxvi. 6.—**Plagued**. To be 'plagued' (lit. 'smitten') by God's chastening hand is the common lot of man (*v.* 5 *b*), and is quite consistent with the consciousness of innocence; Ps. xxxii. is one specimen of the perplexed meditations of some who could not account for their troubles by any known sin; the present passage is another. Hence **my rebuke** (i.e. my punishment; see xxxix. 12) means the penalty of some 'secret sin' (xix. 13).

15 **The generation of thy**

children, i.e. the true Israel (*v.* 1), whose members are called collectively God's 'sons,' Deut. xiv. 1 and elsewhere. Comp. 'the generation of those that enquire after him' (xxiv. 6), and see on xii. 8. Observe too the form of the phrase, not 'I should have been a traitor to my father,' or 'to my rank as a son;' the relation of an Israelite to his God is dependent on his membership in the community. See on Isa. lxiii. 16.

16 **It was wearisome trouble**, &c. The word rendered 'wearisome trouble' (*āmāl*) is characteristic of Ecclesiastes. Like the author of that book, the psalmist thinks that no one by searching can find out God (comp. Eccles. viii. 17). But we might also render, 'It was a misery in mine eyes,' i.e. this phenomenon of the undeserved prosperity of the wicked.

17 **The sanctuary of God**. The Hebrew has, 'the sanctuaries of El' (cf. lxxiv. 8), which means either the temple (see on lxxviii. 36) or the 'holy,' i.e. (to profane human reason) inviolable plans of providence (= 'mysteries of God,' Wisd. ii. 22). The latter view is that of Hitzig; the clue to 'God's secrets' (Hitzig's rendering) is furnished by the awful end of the wicked. But the former is the simpler. The temple, being at once the 'house of prayer' (Isa. lvi. 7) and the seat of God's earthly government (lxxviii. 36), is the appropriate place for seeking enlightenment on the subject which exercised the psalmist. There devout men were accustomed to 'see Jehovah's power and His glory' (lxiii. 3); our much-tried thinker as naturally went there 'to see' His providential wisdom.

18 **Surely**. Or, 'But surely' (see on *v.* 1), i.e. in spite of my doubts. Others, 'only' (as in *v.* 1), which Kay explains, 'My view was wrong after all; the only true account is,' &c.—**In slippery places**, i.e. in circumstances of danger (xxxv. 6, Jer. xxiii. 12).

19 The psalmist's solution agrees with that in Pss. xxxvi., xlix., and in some of the speeches in

Job. He had certainly read *Job*, as the word rendered **calamities** itself suggests (cf. Job xviii. 11, 14, &c.).

20 A man is half angry with his dreams on awaking (cf. Job xx. 8). So the Lord, when He re-assumes His judicial functions (see xxxv. 23), will **despise**, i.e. pronounce unworthy of life, **their semblance**, i.e. their unsubstantial phantom-life (*simulacrum vitæ*; see crit. note on xxxix. 7). Thus 'dream' and 'shadow' are not figures for the soul, in spite of *Odys.* xi. 221, ψυχῆ δ', ἤντ' ὄνειρος, but for human life apart from God, which, as Sadi says of the world, is 'like the dream a sleeping man has seen, which, when the night is gone, has vanished.' (The passage also gives a parallel to an admired figure in Wisd. v. 14; see Dr. Lee on Job viii. 9.)

21-24 Breathless (to apply Dante, *Inf.* i. 21) he looks back on the perilous passage. He does not justify his conduct, but explains it. Unbelieving thoughts had fermented in his mind, and a pang of passionate discontent had pierced his inmost being. But the higher self blames the lower for such folly. 'Be ye not like to horse and mule (xxxii. 9), is God's counsel to the believer; and yet I on my side have been like an untamed horse or mule towards God (cf. xcii. 7, Prov. xxx. 2). I have thus for a moment lost the pledge of "continuance"—the sweet, faint hope of immortality (see on xlix. 13). Meantime God on his side has generously kept hold of my struggling right hand.' Note the parallelism of *vv.* 22, 23 in the Hebrew; both verses begin with 'and I.' The sense would have been clearer, however, if the psalmist had made *v.* 23 begin with 'and (yet) thou art continually beside me;' there is an evident contrast between the folly of the tempted believer and the uninterrupted love of his divine Guide.—(**Like the beasts**. Sept., κτηνώδης. Or, 'a behemoth' (Job xl. 15); so Hitzig and Delitzsch. Tastes differ.

24 **Wilt thou lead me.** In his recovered sense of the divine love the poet ceases to enquire into things too high for him. He is absorbed in the blissful thought of God's assured purpose and plan for his life (comp. on xvi. 7).—

Receive me with glory (or, to glory). The 'path of life' (xvi. 11) is not limited to this phantom-world (xxxix. 7). The story of Enoch, spiritualised, is that of each devout believer.¹ 'Walking with God' is followed by a reception 'with glory' (or 'into glory'). Comp. Gen. v. 24, and above on xlix. 16.

25 One of those exalted moments in which 'heaven's morning breaks.' Having God, earth has become a heaven. What more could heaven itself give him? Society? But 'to which of the holy ones should he turn?' (Job v. 1; cf. on lxxxix. 6, 7.)

26 See on xvi. 9-11. The poet speaks of a **heart**, or personality, which will survive even when the old 'heart,' or personality, shall have **wasted away**. It is the mysticism of faith; we are on the verge of St. Paul's conception of the *πνεῦμα*—the organ of life in God. 'Non omnis moriar,' in a new sense. The believer 'cleaves' (so *v.* 28, Sept.) to his 'rock.'

27 God and Israel were the two absorbing objects of the psalmist's love, and a passionate love for Israel did not involve (it did not even with Jeremiah) a similarly strong charitable affection for single 'lost sheep.'

28 **To be near to God** is to trust Him (see Zeph. iii. 2), and so to be truly wise; to 'desert God' is to be unbelieving, and so to be comparable in folly to the beasts (cf. *vv.* 22, 27).

PSALM LXXIV.

'THE contents of Pss. lxxiv., lxxix. seem to carry us down not only to the Chaldæan, but even the Maccabæan period.' So Delitzsch, who hesitates, however, to come to a conclusion, on the ground that the exegetical phenomena point in different directions. I do not feel the same hesitation, but readily grant that the psalmist may remember descriptions of the Chaldæan trouble, and therefore not give a thoroughly accurate account of the later calamity. For such a fusion of kindred historical scenes there are analogies in the prophets. Comp., however, 1 Macc. iii. 45, and especially the prayer of Judas Maccabæus, 2 Macc. viii. 2-4. (See also introd. to Ps. lxxix.)

- 1 Why, Elohim, hast thou 'cast off for ever'?
why doth thine anger smoke against the flock of thy shepherd-
ing?
- 2 Remember thy congregation which thou gottest long since,
which thou didst redeem as the tribe of thine inheritance;
Mount Zion, whereon thou hast dwelt.
- 3 Lift up thy feet unto the 'everlasting ruins';
the enemy hath marred all in the sanctuary.
- 4 Thy foes roared amid thy trysting-place;
they set up their signs for (true) signs.
- 5 They seemed like those who wield on high
hatchets in a thicket of wood;

¹ I see that Prof. Sayce recognises a similar course of thought in Babylonian theology (*Hibbert Lectures*, p. 365). Cf. my article in *Expositor*, Jan. 1888.

- 6 At last—the carved work thereof altogether
with axes and hammers they struck off.
- 7 They set on fire thy sanctuary ;
they profaned the habitation of thy name, (bringing it) to the
ground.
- 8 They have said in their hearts, ‘Let us suppress them alto-
gether !’
they have burned up all sacred meeting-places in the land.
- 9 We see not our signs, there is no prophet any more ;
neither is there with us any that knows how long.
- 10 How long, O God, shall the foe insult ?
(how long) shall the enemy ‘contemn thy name for ever’ ?
- 11 Why drawest thou back thy hand,
and thy right hand (why) keepest thou within thy bosom ?
- 12 For God is my King from of old,
who works salvation in the midst of the earth.
- 13 *Thou* didst divide the sea by thy strength ;
thou breakest the heads of the dragons on the waters.
- 14 *Thou* didst crush the heads of leviathan in pieces,
and gavest him to be food for a people of wild beasts.
- 15 *Thou* didst cause fountain and torrent to break forth ;
thou didst dry up ever-flowing streams.
- 16 Thine is the day, thine also is the night ;
thou didst establish luminary and sun.
- 17 *Thou* didst set all the bounds of the earth ;
summer and winter—*thou* didst form them.
- 18 Think how the enemy insults Jehovah,
and how a foolish people contemn thy name.
- 19 Deliver not unto the sword the soul of thy turtle-dove ;
forget not the life of thine afflicted for ever.
- 20 Look upon the covenant, for full are now become
the dark places of the land of haughtiness and violence.
- 21 O let not the down-trodden turn back ashamed ;
let the afflicted and the needy praise thy name
- 22 Arise, O God, plead thy cause ;
think how the fool insults thee all day long.
- 23 Forget not the voice of thy foes,
the uproar of thine assailants which ascends continually.

I Cast off for ever. The psalmist quotes from himself ; why, he asks, am I to go on repeating this sad phrase (see on xiii. 2)?—
Doth thine anger smoke. He is

like a shepherd concerned for his flock when a black thunder-cloud hangs overhead. (The true shepherd of Israel, Jehovah, leads his flock no more ; see on lxxx. 2.)

2 **The tribe**, &c. The conventional phrase, 'the *tribes* of Israel,' was not always used after the fall of the northern kingdom. See Jer. x. 16 (li. 19), but cf. Isa. lxiii. 17.

3 **Lift up thy feet**, &c., i.e. proceed in long swift steps to the ruined sanctuary. Sept., however, has 'thy hands.'—**Everlasting ruins**. The psalmist again quotes from himself. In his moments of agonised doubt it seemed as if this desolation must last for ever. Isa. lviii. 12, lxi. 4 are not parallel.

4-9 A retrospect of the cruel work of destruction.—**Roared**. A common expression for the battle-cry (Isa. v. 29, Jer. ii. 15). So of the Chaldæans, 'They have uttered their voice in the house of Jehovah as on a festival-day' (Lam. ii. 7).—**Thy trysting-place**. Or, 'thy place for meeting (us)'. The same phrase occurs in Lam. ii. 6; it resembles the well-known title of the tabernacle—'tent of meeting'—in Ex. xxvii. 21, &c. The Var. reading, 'thy places of meeting' (supported by many MSS. and editions, and by the Targum), seems due to the spirit of harmonising (see *v.* 8).—**Their signs**. These are to be taken as military standards (Jerome, 'posuerunt signa sua in tropæum'; Athanasius, τὰ καλούμενα παρὰ τοῖς στρατεύμασι σίγνα), but, more suitably to the context, as the images and other symbols of a heathen religion. Comp. 1 Macc. i. 54.

6 **At last**. There is a pause, the attention of singer and listener being strained to the utmost. The costly carved work, with its sacred even if little understood symbols, is wantonly destroyed. Comp. 1 Kings vi. 29. For 'carved work,' Sept. has 'gates,' which supplies a striking correspondence to 1 Macc. iv. 38, 2 Macc. viii. 33, i. 18.

7 Comp. 2 Kings xxv. 9, and the passages last referred to in Maccabees.

8 (See crit. note.) Radical measures were more than once proposed in dealing with this 'unsocial nation' (see on lxxxiii. 4). But 'to kill the body' was a tedious undertaking; to 'kill the soul'—or at least the nerve of the spiritual life—seemed a shorter and not less effectual way of quenching the light of Israel. Hence the synagogues and 'places of prayer,' (first mentioned after the Exile; cf. 1 Macc. iii. 46) are given to the flames. — **Sacred meeting-places**. Lit., 'meeting-places of God (El),' i.e. those which are concerned with religion (cf. 'God's comforts,' i.e. religious consolations, Job xv. 11). Gesenius thinks of the ancient sanctuaries of the land, 'excelsis prophetarumque coloniis insignia' (similarly De Wette and even Vitringa); but even if the *bāmōth* had in some form survived, how could the psalmist regret their final extinction? Besides the *bāmōth* were in some degree 'habitations of God's name' (cf. *v.* 7); something fresh must be spoken of here. Those who meet in a *mō'ed* are not necessarily God and His people (as in *v.* 4), but possibly those who, though far from any venerated shrine, wish to pray or to be instructed together. Leopold Löw thinks that 'town-halls' existed before the Exile, and that religious instruction was given in them, and finds them alluded to in Job xxx. 23. The sole advantage of this hypothesis is that it removes what Delitzsch calls a weighty argument for the Maccabæan date of the psalm—viz. a direct reference to *synagogues*, which, as most are agreed, did not become a national institution till the second century B.C.¹ But why hold out against Maccabæan psalms? בֵּית וְעֵד in the Mishna (*Sota* ix. 15) appears to be used synonymously with בֵּית הַכְּנֶסֶת for 'synagogue'; πᾶσας τὰς συναγωγὰς is actually the rendering of Aquila and Symmachus

¹ Strack thinks an earlier date more probable (Herzog-Plitt, *Realencyclopädie*, art. *Synagogen*); but in any case we can hardly carry the date above the reformation of Ezra.

here, though, it is true, they give *ἐν μέσῳ τῆς συναγωγῆς σου* in *v.* 4. (Sept. *v.* 8, *ἐοπράς*; *v.* 4, *ἐοπῆς*).

9 **Our signs.** Possibly (comp. *v.* 4) he thus designates the entire body of Jewish religious forms, including not only such comparatively trifling things as symbolic figures (e.g. the cherubim in the temple), but those distinctive 'signs' of the covenant (Gen. xvii. 11, Ex. xxxi. 13, 17) the rite of circumcision and the Sabbath (comp. Lam. ii. 6, and especially 1 Macc. i. 45, 46, 60, 61). It is equally possible, however, that the phrase 'our signs' means the facts or events which students of Scripture would regard as betokening the near fulfilment of prophecy — 'so likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors' (Matt. xxiv. 33). This view harmonises well with the mention of the prophets and the concluding 'how long.' 'Signs' in this sense of the word were of course not necessarily what we call supernatural; we need not, therefore, accept G. Buchanan's paraphrase, 'signa nusquam, nulla jam miracula,' though it has the support probably of Theodore of Mopsuestia and certainly of the prayer of the son of Sirach, 'Renew the signs, and repeat the wonders; glorify (thy) hand and (thy) right arm' (Ecclus. xxxvi. 6). — **No prophet . . .**

how long. So, then, prophecy has become mainly an unveiling of the immediate future. Complaints of the extinction or of the non-fulfilment of prophecy are characteristic of the Maccabæan and the following period. For the former, see 1 Macc. xiv. 41, 'until there should arise a faithful prophet' (comp. 1 Macc. iv. 46, ix. 27); for the latter, Ecclus. xxxvi. 15 *b*, 'ratify the prophecies in thy name.' [Those, however, who assign our psalm to the Chaldæan period suppose the psalmist to complain, not that there

are no prophets alive, but that there are none who foretell what shall come to pass, 'quia licet tunc viverent Jeremias, Ezechiel et Daniel, scimus tamen quasi vocationis suæ cursu perfunctos tacuisse ad tempus' (Calvin). Comp. Lam. ii. 9, Ezek. vii. 26.]

10 **Contemn thy name for ever.** A phrase which we may suppose the psalmist often used, and now quotes, as it were, from himself (cf. xiii. 2, lxxix. 5, lxxxix. 47). Otherwise 'how long' is inconsistent with 'for ever,' and we are compelled to give לַנְּצַח a strained meaning.

11 **Drawest thou back thy hand,** viz. from repulsing the enemy (Lam. ii. 3). So the son of Sirach, 'Renew the signs and repeat the wonders; glorify (thy) hand and (thy) right arm' (Ecclus. xxxvi. 6). It is the universal religious anthropomorphism; 'gracious are thy hands, O Indra,' says a Vedic poet, 'beneficent thy palms; . . . why, then, dost thou sit still?' (*Rig Veda*, iv. 21, 9). — **And thy right hand,** &c. The text-reading is, 'and thy right hand from within thy bosom (pluck out and) make an end' (comp. lix. 15). Bickell's correction is simple and gives a more natural sense. The context of 'make an end' in lix. 15 is entirely different.

12 Comfort springs from the thought that Israel's King (comp. xlv. 5) has long since showed His saving power **in the midst of the earth**, i.e. not in the land of Canaan as the centre of the earth¹ (comp. Ezek. v. 5, xxxviii. 10), but quite broadly, in various parts of the earth. The same phrase is used of Egypt in Ex. viii. 18 (A.V. 22), and of Egypt the psalmist is especially thinking.

13, 14 **The dragons . . . leviathan.** The 'dragon' and 'leviathan' (or the 'wreathed' serpent) are symbolical expressions for

¹ The idea of the central position of Jerusalem, so congenial to Talmudic Judaism, lingered on in Christendom through the middle ages (see Moore, *The Time-references of the Divina Commedia*, 1887, p. 68). Cf. General Gordon's *Reflexions in Palestine*.

Egypt (comp. on lxviii. 31). See for the former Isa. li. 9, Ezek. xxix. 3, xxxii. 2.—**Gavest him to be food**, &c., i.e. gavest the unburied corpses of the Egyptians to be a prey to the tribes of wild beasts. For the Talmudic fable based on this passage, see references on civ. 26.—**A people of wild beasts**. A favourite primitive conception. See Prov. xxx. 25, 26, and comp. Walther von der Vogelweide, speaking of the communities of animals:

Sie wählen Könige, ordnen Recht,
Und unterscheiden Herrn und Knecht.
(Simrock's version, p. 5.)

15 An allusion to the miracles of the water from the rock, and the passage of the Jordan.

16 **Luminary and sun**. The exact sense is doubtful. 'Luminary' may be a class-name for the heavenly lights (*φωστήρες*); the poet has used other class-names in *v.* 15 *a.* 'Sun' may be added, because no class-name suggested itself as a companion to 'luminary.' On the whole, this is the easiest view. I admit that it produces an imperfect parallelism; but for this compare Eccles. xii. 1, where 'the sun and the light' are parallel to 'the moon and the stars.' Another opinion is that '(the) luminary' stands for the moon, just as '(the) light' (*lux*) stands for the sun in Job xxxi. 26. The objection is that the moon would thus be too vaguely indicated, 'luminary' being also used of the sun (see Gen. i. 14, 16). A third, that the phrase means the sun; comp. 'thy hand and thy right hand,' *v.* 11 (received text), and 'thy right hand and thine arm,' xlv. 4; Buchanan's *solis jubar* may express this view. But what of 'the day' and 'the night' in the parallel line? Comp. the dispute over *la stella*, Dante, *Inf.* ii. 55.

18 **Insults Jehovah**. An abrupt transition to the third person, bespeaking the writer's mental

agitation.—**The foolish people** (so *v.* 22). Comp. Deut. xxxii. 21, and see on xiv. 1.

19 The difficulty felt in line 1 arises from a corruption (see crit. note).—**Thy turtle-dove**. Israel is here finely symbolised (comp. on lxviii. 14) by the turtle-dove,¹ whose 'low, sad plaint may be heard all day long at certain seasons in the olive-groves, and in the solitary and shady valleys among these mountains' (Thomson). It is tempting to find in this line a contrast between the 'wild beast' and the 'turtle-dove,' the Israelites being accustomed to classify sentient beings, not on scientific zoological, but on the most primitive moral principles (see on xxii. 13). But in my opinion this can only be done if we omit *khayyath* in the second line, as proposed by Bickell. The course adopted is certainly less arbitrary (see crit. note).—**Thine afflicted**. The poet falls naturally into individualism. Not merely Israel, but the individual members of the nation, are, at this stage of religious progress, regarded as the objects of the divine love. St. Francis is therefore right when he speaks (*Fioretto*, cap. xxii.) of 'uccelli così mansueti, a' quali nella Scrittura sono assomigliate le anime caste e umili e fedeli.'

20 **Look upon the covenant**, i.e. give heed to the straits of thy worshippers. So in Dan. xi. 28, 30 'covenant' means the faithful Israelites, and in Isa. lvi. 4 the true religion (or, we might say, the Church).—**The dark places of the land**, i.e. (if the text is sound) either the region darkened by misfortune (cf. Isa. ix. 2), or the obscure hiding-places of the Jewish fugitives. For the latter view, cf. 1 Macc. i. 52, 53, 'And many of the people were gathered unto them, every one that forsook the law; and they committed evils in the land, and drove the Israelites into *hiding-places* (*κρύφοι*), wherever they could

¹ From Isa. xxxviii. 14 compared with Jer. viii. 7 it is clear that *tôr* and *yônâh* were used indiscriminately, according to the exigencies of rhythm.

find a refuge.' Comp. 2 Macc. vi. 11.—**Of haughtiness and violence.** The text has, 'of the homes of violence;' why? For Bickell's easy correction, cf. lxxiii. 6.

PSALM LXXV.

THE psalm opens with praise, but continues in a different tone. The promised rehearsal of God's wonders will take place elsewhere. Here we listen to two divine oracles, separated by a lyric comment. God utters them as a Judge—a representation familiar to us in the Asaphite psalms.

2 We give thanks unto thee, Elohim, we give thanks unto thee ;
and they that call upon thy name rehearse thy wonders.

(*God speaketh.*)

3 'For I seize the appointed time ;
I myself judge in equity.

4 When the earth and all its inhabitants melt with fear,
I myself adjust the pillars of it.

5 I say unto the boasters, Be not so boastful,
and to the ungodly, Do not exalt your horn ;

6 Do not exalt your horn toward heaven,
nor speak arrogantly of the Rock.'

7 For not from the east, nor from the west,
nor yet from the mountainous desert * * *

8 Nay, but Elohim is judge ;
this one he puts down, and that one he raises up.

9 For in the hand of Jehovah there is a cup with wine—
foaming wine that is full of mixture ;
and he pours out to this one and to that one :
surely the dregs thereof shall all the ungodly of the earth sup
up and drink.

10 And as for me, I will declare it for ever ;
I will make melody unto the God of Jacob.

11 'All the horns of the ungodly also will I cut off ;
exalted shall be the horns of the righteous.'

2 **They that call,** &c. Or, 'they that called.' In any case, the psalmist connects deliverance with the offering of public supplications. The text, however, has 'and near is thy name ; they have rehearsed thy wonders ;' or, less in the Hebrew spirit, 'and "near is thy name," (this) have thy wonders rehearsed.' The nearness of God's 'name' would mean the conscious enjoy-

ment of His protecting care (cf. xxxiv. 19, xlvi. 2).

3 '**For I seize,**' &c. The inspiration of the writer, at first merely poetic, becomes prophetic. To the believer he offers comfort, to the ungodly warnings and threats. He speaks in the name of Jehovah, the principles of whose government he proceeds to declare. As soon as the 'appointed time' (Hab. ii. 3)

has fully come, Jehovah will seize upon it for executing just judgment. Through violence and injustice the moral bases of the earth (not only of Palestine) are shaken (lxxxii. 5), and its oppressed inhabitants **melt with fear**; at such times Jehovah interposes visibly, and 'adjusts,' or reendows with their old efficacy, 'the pillars' or standards of right and wrong. Comp. Luther, 'The world seems to me like a decayed house. David and the prophets are the spars; Christ is the main pillar in the midst that supporteth all' (*Table Talk*).

5, 6 It is doubted whether these distichs belong to Jehovah or to the poet himself. But as the first person continues, the former view is more natural, unless, with Bickell, we suppose 'Therefore' to have fallen out at the beginning of the verse. 'Exalting the horn' is a new figure; we shall meet with it again. It symbolises here overweening self-importance, but in *v.* 11 the attainment of power and dignity. Jehovah being the speaker, it is likely that the 'arrogance' is that of heathen invaders (as in *xciv.* 4; comp. 7; not as in *xxxi.* 19).—**Of the Rock**, i.e. Israel's Rock, *Isa.* xxx. 29, *Deut.* xxxii. 37, *Hab.* i. 12 (see *crit.* note).

7-9 The psalmist's comment. Help to believers and retributive justice come from God, who alone disposes of the destinies of the nations. Three only of the four quarters of the globe are mentioned; the north is excepted, because danger menaces Judah from this quar-

ter. The third quarter is described with reference to Judah, as the **mountainous desert**, i.e. the region bounded by the hilly wilderness of Judah. There may be an allusion here to some fact of contemporary history of which we are ignorant. To take the phrase as an equivalent for the Arabian border of Egypt seems to me less natural. But how is the sentence to be completed? The analogy of *cxxi.* 1 suggests the supplement 'cometh our help.' The rendering, 'nor yet from the desert cometh exaltation,' imputes to the poet a want of feeling for language. There is no parallel for such a phrase. The coming of a redeemer and of redemption is familiar to us, but not the coming of an exalter and of exaltation. The singularity of the Hebrew is due to the desire for a rhyme; *v.* 7 ends with *hārīm*, *v.* 8 ends with *yārīm*.

9 **A cup with wine**. See on 'wine of reeling,' *lx.* 5. The corresponding figure is the 'cup which is satisfaction' (*xxiii.* 5; cf. *Sept.*) We are reminded of the two vessels by the throne of Zeus, *Il.* xxiv. 527, &c.—**Mixture** alludes to ingredients such as spices and pomegranate-juice (*Cant.* viii. 2), which would make the 'strong drink' (*shēkār*) more seductive to those who drank it (comp. *Isa.* v. 22, *Prov.* ix. 2).—**To this one and to that one**. (See *crit.* note.) So *Jer.* xxv. 17; cf. an-Nâbigha's verse on the giving and taking of the 'wine of Doom' (Lyll, *Arabian Poetry*, p. 96).

PSALM LXXVI.

THE shortest and most vigorous of the Asaphite psalms, referred in the Septuagint to the catastrophe of the Assyrian army.

- 2 In Judah is Elohim renowned ;
his name is great in Israel.
- 3 For in Salem his bower was set,
and his mansion in Zion :
- 4 There brake he the lightnings of the bow,
shield and sword, and equipment of war.

- 5 Terrible art thou and glorious (in thy ruling) from the everlasting mountains.
- 6 Spoiled are the stout of heart, they sleep their sleep, and all the men of might have lost their hands.
- 7 At thy rebuke, O God of Jacob, deep sleep hath fallen both upon chariot and upon horse.
- 8 Thou ! terrible art thou, and who can stand before thee when once thou art angry ?
- 9 Out of heaven didst thou sound forth judgment ; earth feared and became still,
- 10 At God's rising up for judgment, to save all the afflicted of the earth.
- 11 For the wrath of man shall give thanks unto thee ; with the residue of (thy) great wrath thou wilt gird thyself.
- 12 Vow and pay unto Jehovah your God, let all around him bring presents,
- 13 Unto the Terrible One, who lops off the passion of princes, and is terrible to the kings of the earth.

3 **Salem**, or, more strictly, Shalem. The name may be taken from Gen. xiv. 11. According to Josephus (*Ant.* i. 10, 2) it is the original form of Jerusalem (Σόλυμα—Ἱεροσόλυμα). More probably it is a shortened form of that name ; the tendency to abbreviate names was and is strong among the Semitic races (comp. Peor for Baal Peor, Num. xxv. 18, &c. ; el Chalil for 'Mosque of the Friend of Allah,' i.e. Hebron ; el Kuds for Beit el kuds, i.e. Jerusalem). The poet instinctively feels that 'Salem' is the really important element in the compound. May it not be, as Grill suggests,¹ an old name of Israel's God ? We find *Yahveh-Shālôm* (Yahvè-Peace) as a title of Yahveh (Jehovah) in Judg. vi. 24, and Salmānu is the name of an Assyrian god (a god of peace), Schrader, *K.A.T.*, ed. 2, p. 266.²—**His bower** (or, pavilion). This is surely a better rendering than 'his covert,' as if Jehovah were compared to a lion issuing from its 'covert' or 'lair'

to attack its prey (comp. Jer. xxv. 38). The temple is meant, which is a 'bower' of peace (*Shālēm* suggests the idea of *shālôm*) to the believer. See the fine passage on Zion, Isa. iv. 6. This is in harmony with the view adopted on xxvii. 5.—**His mansion**. Others, 'his lair' (same word of the lion, civ. 22). The masculine form of this word is used of God's heavenly dwelling-place, lxviii. 6.

4 **The lightnings of the bow**, i.e. the swift-flying arrows. See on lxxviii. 48.

5 **Terrible art thou**, &c. The idiom as in lxviii. 36. 'The everlasting mountains,' as Hab. iii. 6, Gen. xlix. 26. Jehovah is supposed to be enthroned on the mountains of Jerusalem (comp. lxxxvii. 1, cxxxiii. 3). This view perhaps suits the context best ; but it is also admissible to render, 'Fearful art thou and more glorious than,' &c. If Jehovah's glory may be compared to that of the ocean, why not also to that of the 'everlasting moun-

¹ *Zeitschrift für die alttest. Wissenschaft*, 1884, p. 145.

² The above may now be compared with Sayce, *Hibbert Lectures*, pp. 57, 58 (φωνᾶντα συνεροῖσιν).

tains' (the text-reading 'mountains of prey' must be discarded)?

6, 7 A vivid description of the catastrophe. **They sleep their sleep.** The Hebrew, more finely, gives 'they have slumbered into their (last sleep.)—**Have lost their hands.** Their hands, or vital forces, are paralysed (by death). Comp. the idiom in Josh. viii. 20, 2 Sam. vii. 27, Dukes, *Rabbin. Blumenlese*, p. 191.—

Both upon chariot and upon horse. The poet means of course the warriors who use chariot and horse. Comp. Ex. xv. 19, Isa. xliii. 17.

9 **Out of heaven,** &c. Jehovah may be said interchangeably to judge the world from heaven and from his throne on Mount Zion (comp. lxviii. 34–36). 'Sounding forth judgment' implies the image of thunder as God's voice; comp. xlvi. 7.

11 **For the wrath of man,** &c. The whole verse is dark, but the first part admits of a plausible explanation. 'Jehovah,' says a proverb (Prov. xvi. 4), 'hath made everything for its end, and the wicked also for the day of evil.' Man's passionate rebellion does but provide a fresh theatre for God's mighty power. But how can God 'gird himself' with the 'residue of (his) great wrath'? Does it mean that

after each fresh display of anger there is still wherewith to gird Himself for a fresh battle—in short, that His capacity of wrath is as inexhaustible as man's sin? Or is the 'great wrath' that of Jehovah's foes? In this case 'girding' must have the sense of 'putting on as an ornament'—a sense not favoured by the context, and therefore less probable. The view provisionally adopted is that of Delitzsch and Hitzig; the latter well compares Rev. xi. 18, *καὶ τὰ ἔθνη ὠργίσθησαν, καὶ ἤλθεν ἡ ὀργὴ σου.* 'Great wrath,' literally, 'wraths;' just as 'salvations' means '(God's) abundant salvation.' I confess my mind remains unsatisfied. The least possible correction of the text would be Ewald's, 'shall hold festival unto thee' (from Sept.); but the expression seems strained. It is just possible that the error lies principally in 'wrath' and 'wraths.' Might we correct this so as to render, 'For the tumult of Aram shall praise thee; the remnant of Hamath shall come trembling unto thee?' See crit. note.

13 **Unto the Terrible One.** So Isa. viii. 13 (see Heb.)—**Who lops off,** &c. When the fruit of human passion is ripe, Jehovah 'cuts it off with pruning-knives' (Isa. xviii. 5.)

PSALM LXXVII.

THE psalmist recalls some dark moments he has lately had; perhaps even quotes the psalm in which he expressed his struggle against despair. He describes how he recovered his balance by remembering God's mercies in ancient times (so that national mercies are meant, and therefore national troubles). The connexion is as difficult as in Ps. cxvi. Notice in advance the use of 'Joseph' for the northern kingdom in this and the neighbouring psalms (lxxvii. 15, lxxviii. 67, lxxx. 2, lxxxi. 6); also the favourite Asaphite comparison of Israel to a flock (lxxvii. 15, lxxviii. 52, lxxix. 13, lxxx. 2; cf. Mic. vii. 14).

- 2 'With my voice unto Jehovah fain would I cry,
with my voice unto Elohim, that he may hearken unto me.'
- 3 In the day of my trouble (thus) did I seek the Lord;
in the night was my hand stretched forth incessantly,
my soul refused to be comforted.

- 4 'Thinking upon God, I can but moan ;
musing thereupon, my spirit faints away.'
- 5 Thou didst hold open the guards of mine eyes ;
I was so stricken that I could not speak.
- 6 I considered the days of old,
the years of ancient times :
- 7 'Let me call to mind' (said I) 'my song in the night,
let me muse in my heart ;' and I (thus) searched out my
spirit :
- 8 'Will the Lord cast off for ever,
and be favourable no more ?
- 9 Is his lovingkindness come utterly to an end ?
has his promise failed for all generations ?
- 10 Has God forgotten to pity ?
or has he drawn in his compassion angrily ?'
- 11 And I said, 'It is my sickness :
the years of the right hand of the most High !
- 12 I will celebrate the exploits of Jehovah,
yea, remember thy wonders of old ;
- 13 I will also meditate upon all thy work,
and muse upon thy exploits.'
- 14 Elohim, in holiness is thy way ;
who is so great a God as Jehovah ?
- 15 Thou art the God that doeth wonders ;
thou hast made known among the peoples thy strength.
- 16 Thou hast guided thy people like a flock,
the sons of Jacob and Joseph.

(Fragment of another Psalm.)

- 17 The waters saw thee, Elohim,
the waters saw thee, and were horror-struck ;
the abysses also trembled.
- 18 Cloud-masses gushed out in water ;
yea, they uttered a voice ;
thine arrows also went hither and thither.
- 19 The voice of thy thunder was in a whirlwind,
flashes lightened the world,
the earth trembled and quaked.
- 20 Through the sea went thy way,
and thy path through great waters,
and thy footprints could not be known.

3 **Was my hand stretched forth**, viz. in supplication (xxviii. 2).
4-6 Comp. the parallel passage,

cxliii. 3-5. *V.* 4 is parallel to *v.* 1 ;
these verses together represent the
sad complaint of the psalmist 'in

the day of his trouble.'—**I can but moan.** The thought of God is no source of comfort as yet; because the poet is still absorbed in the gloomy present. He is below the spiritual level of the author of Pss. xlii., xliii., who can look, however unsteadily, at the mercies of the past, and who thus admits a sunbeam of hope.

7 **My song in the night**, i.e. my former grateful thanksgivings. Comp. xlii. 9 (note), xcii. 3.—**I (thus) searched out my spirit.** The higher expostulates with the lower self (cf. Pss. xlii., xliii.) 'Do I really mean to say that the Lord has cast me off; or is there not in the recesses of my spirit, when I have searched these out, a consciousness that Jehovah is unchangeably the same?'

8-10 At first sight these lines seem inconsistent with the plan of a retrospect, hinted at in *v.* 7*a*. But all depends on the tone in which the questions are uttered. The tone (as *vv.* 11-13 show) is that which expects a negative answer. The poet 'searches out' his unbelieving suspicions, and exposes his own unreasonableness.

11 **It is my sickness**, i.e. this trouble of mine is a chastening from God (comp. Jer. x. 19). Understand, 'but let me not despair; he hath not given me over unto death' (cxviii. 18). Then follows an elevating thought expressed in its simplest form like an exclamation, **the years**, &c., i.e. I will remember (comp. *v.* 6) the time when 'the right hand of Jehovah had the pre-eminence' (cxviii. 16). The image presents itself to his mind in its simplest form. He is too 'stricken' to build an argument upon it in words. There are of course other explanations, owing to the ambiguity of the words rendered 'my sickness' and 'the years (of)'. For instance, De Witt renders, 'This is my

misery, that the right hand of the Most High is changed' (i.e. become inactive, lxxiv. 11). So Lowth (*Prælect.* xxvi.), Hitzig, Hupfeld, following the versions. But see the Hebrew of *v.* 6, and consider whether this rendering is suitable at the opening of an expostulation.

14 **In holiness.** 'Holiness' has at any rate here no ethical tinge; it is the correlative of greatness, and is displayed in wonderful works. Practically it means uniqueness, with the secondary idea of unapproachableness (comp. 1 Sam. vi. 20).

16 There is a double reading of each half of this verse. Rhythm and poetry are equally the gainers by combining 21*a* and 16*b* (proposed by Bickell). **The sons of Jacob and Joseph.** Does this mean 'the children of Israel,' especially those of the leading tribe or tribes of Joseph ('a prince among his brethren,' Gen. xlix. 26)? Or does Jacob mean southern and Joseph northern Israel (also called Isaac in Am. vii. 9)? The latter alternative is the easier one; see lxxx. 2, lxxxi. 6, Am. v. 6, 15, vi. 6, Hos. xii. 2, and Obad. 18 (where Jacob and Joseph make up the whole nation; comp. Am. vi. 6, 8). At any rate, these two names had taken root in Canaan as early as Thothmes III. (about 1600 B.C.);¹ it would always be natural to use them when a fuller phrase than 'the sons of Israel' was required.

17-20 These verses are on a different model from that of the rest of the psalm, being tristichs. They do not cohere well either with *vv.* 14-16 or with *v.* 21. They are lyric, not reflective, in tone and style, and have the appearance of having been taken from some other poem. It is idle to say that they are a poetical account of the passage of the Red Sea. They are simply a description of a theophany, without any special reference to

¹ Whether they belonged to tribes or to cities, or to both, is uncertain. They occur in the Karnak list of Palestinian towns, which includes names restored in Hebrew form, as Ja'kob-el, Jošep(?)-el. See Meyer, 'Der Stamm Jakob,' in *Stade's Zeitschrift*, 1886, p. 1, &c., comparing letters in the *Academy*, Sept. 1887.

any personal intervention of Jehovah in the past. Of course the poet believed in such interventions; so did the author of Hab. iii. 10-15, but neither writer is to be tied down to any definite point in history. Both writers belong to the period of imitative, artificial poetry. Whether one imitated the other, or whether both copied some older and more creative poet, is impossible to decide, and superfluous to discuss here.

18 **Cloud-masses.** 'Clouds' = *sh'khāqīm*; 'masses' = 'ābhōth. A twofold liberty will strike the Hebraist; sense is the gainer. The

rendering 'cloud,' or 'clouds,' is required here and in xviii. 12, lxxviii. 23 (cf. Job. xxxvi. 28, xxxviii. 37, Prov. iii. 20, Isa. xlv. 8). The old exegetical tradition is in favour of the rendering 'clouds' even where (Pss. lxxxix. 7, lxviii. 35) 'skies' is absolutely required. The root-meaning is probably to be thinly stretched out (Gesenius; Fleischer).

19 **In a whirlwind.** The thunder, that is, pealed to the accompaniment of a whirlwind. See crit. note.

20 **Thy footprints.** The marks of Jehovah's passage over the bed of the Red Sea.

PSALM LXXVIII.

A 'HISTORICAL PSALM' (see on cv.), the facts of which are supplied by the Jehovistic narrative (JE).

- 1 Give ear, O my people, to my teaching,
incline your ear to the words of my mouth ;
- 2 I would open my mouth in a parable,
I would utter riddles of ancient date.
- 3 That which we have heard and known,
and our fathers have rehearsed to us—
- 4 We will not hide from their children,
rehearsing it to the generation to come,
even the praises of Jehovah and his great force,
and his wonderful works that he has done.
- 5 For he established a testimony in Jacob,
and appointed a rule in Israel,
whereby he commanded our fathers
to make it known to their children,
- 6 That the generation to come might know it,
the children who should be born,
who, rising up, might rehearse it to their children ;
- 7 That they might place their confidence in Elohim,
and not forget the exploits of God,
but keep his commandments,
- 8 And might not be as their fathers,
an unruly and rebellious generation,
a generation that had not established their heart,
and whose spirit was not faithful towards God.

- 9 The children of Ephraim, armed with the bow,
turned back in the day of battle :
- 10 They kept not the covenant of God,
and refused to walk in his law,
- 11 And forgot his exploits,
and his wonders that he had showed them.
- 12 Before their fathers he had done wonders,
in the land of Egypt, the country of Zoan ;
- 13 He clave the sea, and let them pass over,
and piled up the waters as a harvest-heap ;
- 14 And he guided them with a cloud by day,
and all the night through with a light of fire.
- 15 He clave rocks in the wilderness,
and gave them drink as from the ocean-floods abundantly ;
- 16 And brought forth streams from the crag,
and made the waters run down like rivers.
- 17 But they sinned yet more against him,
defying the most High in the desert.
- 18 And they tempted God in their heart,
requiring food for their lust ;
- 19 And spake against Elohim, and said,
' Can God furnish a table in the wilderness ?
- 20 Behold, he smote the rock, that the waters gushed out,
and torrents overflowed ;
can he give bread also,
or provide flesh for his people ?'
- 21 When he heard it, therefore, Jehovah was furious,
and a fire was kindled against Jacob,
and anger also came up against Israel ;
- 22 Because they believed not in Elohim,
and trusted not in his salvation.
- 23 And he commanded the clouds above,
and opened the doors of heaven,
- 24 And rained upon them manna to eat,
and gave them the corn of heaven.
- 25 Men did eat the food of the Mighty :
he sent them provisions to the full.
- 26 He caused the east wind to set forth in heaven,
and by his power he led on the south wind :
- 27 He rained flesh also upon them as dust,
and winged birds as the sand of the sea ;

- 28 And let it fall within their camp,
round about their habitations.
- 29 So they did eat and were well filled,
for that which they fancied he had brought unto them.
- 30 (But) not yet were they cloyed with their fancy,
still was their food in their mouths,
- 31 When the anger of Elohim came up against them,
and slew the stoutest of them,
and laid low the ripened youths of Israel.
- 32 For all this they sinned yet more,
and believed not in his wondrous works.
- 33 So he made their days to vanish like a breath,
and their years by a sudden end.
- 34 When he slew them, they enquired after him,
and turned back, and sought God earnestly.
- 35 And they remembered that Elohim was their Rock,
and God most High their redeemer,
- 36 But they only enticed him with their mouth,
and lied unto him with their tongue ;
- 37 Their heart was not stedfast towards him,
neither were they faithful unto his covenant.
- 38 But he is full of compassion,
forgives iniquity and destroys not ;
yea, many a time takes he back his anger,
and arouses not all his wrath ;
- 39 So he bethought him that they were but flesh,
and wind that passes away, and comes not again.
- 40 How oft did they defy him in the wilderness,
and pain him in the desert !
- 41 Yea, time after time they tempted God,
and grieved the Holy One of Israel.
- 42 They remembered not his hand,
the day when he set them free from the foe ;
- 43 How he had set forth his signs in Egypt,
and his wonders in the country of Zoan.
- 44 For he turned their Nile-canals into blood,
and they could not drink their streams ;
- 45 He sent among them dogflies, which devoured them,
and frogs, which destroyed them.
- 46 He gave also their produce unto the caterpillar,
and their labour unto the locust.

- 47 He killed their vines with hail,
and their fig-trees with stones of ice,
48 And gave their cattle over to the hail,
and their flocks to the (sky-sent) flames ;
49 He sent against them his hot anger,
fury, fervent ire, and trouble,
as commissioned angels of woe.
50 He made a smooth road for his anger ;
he held not back their soul from death,
but gave their life over to the pestilence.
51 And he smote every firstborn in Egypt,
the firstlings of strength in the tents of Ham :
52 But he made his own people to go stage by stage like sheep,
and led them on like a flock in the wilderness,
53 And guided them safely, that they were not affrighted,
but the sea covered their enemies.
54 And he brought them unto his holy borders,
to yon mount, which his own right hand had gotten ;
55 And he drove out the nations before them,
and those he allotted as a measured inheritance,
and made the tribes of Israel to dwell in their tents.
56 But they tempted and defied God most High,
and observed not his ordinances ;
57 But swerved and were faithless like their fathers—
turned aside like a deceitful bow,
58 For they vexed him with their high places,
and moved him to jealousy with their graven images.
59 When God heard this, he was furious,
and greatly abhorred Israel,
60 So that he cast off the habitation of Shiloh,
his pavilion where he had dwelt among men,
61 And delivered his own strength to captivity,
and his splendour into the hand of the foe.
62 He abandoned his people to the sword,
and was furious against his inheritance.
63 The fire devoured their young men,
and their virgins were not praised in the song.
64 Their priests fell by the sword,
and their widows could make no lamentation.
65 Then the Lord awaked as one that had slept,
and like a warrior who shouts from wine.

- 66 He beat his foemen backward ;
 he put upon them a lasting insult.
- 67 And he rejected the pavilion of Joseph
 and chose not the tribe of Ephraim,
- 68 But chose the tribe of Judah,
 Mount Zion which he loved ;
- 69 And he built his sanctuary like the heavenly heights,
 like the earth which he has founded for ever.
- 70 He chose David also his servant,
 and took him away from the sheepfolds ;
- 71 From following the ewes he brought him,
 to feed Jacob his people and Israel his inheritance.
- 72 So he fed them according to the integrity of his heart,
 and with the skilfulness of his hands he guided them.

1-8 Introduction. The opening lines remind us of xlix. 2-5. There the teaching of the psalmist is expressly referred to divine revelation, whereas here the author bespeaks attention for 'his teaching' (*tōra*) on the lower ground that it is based upon a divinely sanctioned tradition. He is more a 'wise man' than a poet. The 'parable' (*mā-shāl*) and the 'riddles' (*khidōth*)—comp. xlix. 4—are not the psalm itself, but the lessons inherent in Jewish history. The object is, not so much to glorify Jehovah ('praises' in *v.* 4 means 'glorious works'), as to promote edification. The 'testimony' and 'rule' (*v.* 5) relate to the instruction of the young in those wonderful works by which Jehovah in old time rewarded those who trusted Him.

9 The disobedience of N. Israel is at once singled out as one of the special subjects of the psalm. This is described allegorically (comp. *v.* 57). The historical details begin at *v.* 12.

12-25 How wondrously did Jehovah guide the ancestors of these rebellious Ephraimites! Strict chronological accuracy indeed is not preserved. 'Massa' and 'Meribah' occur in Exodus subsequently to the sending of the manna. The allusion in *v.* 21 is to Num. xi.; another violation of strict order.—

Corn of heaven; comp. cv. 40, Ex. xvi. 4.—**The food of the Mighty**, i.e. of the angels (Sept.), elsewhere called 'heroic in power' (cii. 20).

26 The **east** and the **south** belong together; it was a *khamasln* or sirocco wind of the desert, which blows from south and south-east with the force of a gale. Hence in line 1 it is compared (as Num. xi. 31) to a general breaking up his encampment (cf. *v* in 2 Kings xix. 8).

35 **God most High**, Heb. *El Elyōn*, a combination only found here and in Gen. xiv. 18, 20, 22. (See, however, lxxiii. 11.)

40 **How oft did they defy him**, &c. An allusion to Isa. lxiii. 10, where the same combination of verbs occurs. 'Defied,' of the Spirit of Jehovah, occurs in cvi. 33.

43 For the phraseology, comp. Ex. x. 2. So cv. 27.

48 **To the hail . . . to the flames**. So Sept., Targ., in accordance with Ex. ix. 23, 24. Another psalmist thinks the union of lightning and hail too poetic a feature to be omitted. Otherwise it would be plausible to transpose two letters, and render (in *a*) 'to the pestilence,' in which case 'the flames' (in *b*) mean 'fiery sickness' (comp. Hab. iii. 4, Deut. xxxii. 24, where, however, it is 'the flame,' in the singu-

lar form). In lxxvi. 4 we found the same word rendered here 'flames' in the phrase 'the lightnings of the bow' (i.e. swift arrows); the sing. (*réshef*) occurs in Job v. 7 *b*, 'the sons of flame' (i.e. 'the sparks'?). 'Flame' (*réshef*) is also a name of the Phœnician Fire-god,¹ and in Cant. viii. 6 the same word is used (in the plural) of flames which issue forth from Jehovah.

49 **As commissioned angels of woe.** Lit., 'a mission of messengers of (the class of) hurtful ones.' Comp. Job xxxiii. 22, 'and his life (draw near) to the Slayers.' Sept. wrongly, ἀποστολήν δι' ἀγγέλων ποιηρῶν (cf. Isa. xxx. 5, ὅτι εἰσὶν ἐν Τάνει ἀρχηγοὶ ἄγγελοι ποιηροί).

51 **In the tents of Ham.** Here, as in cv. 23, cvi. 22, Ham is a synonym for Mizraim; in Gen. 10, however, it denotes not only Mizraim, but other southern nations. Hence some have thought that the author of the Table of Nations gave the name a wider significance than properly belonged to it, Ham (Kham) being a freely Hebraised form of the native name of Egypt, Kem-t ('the black'); in favour of this view, see Ebers, *Aegypten*, i. 55; Budde, *Urgeschichte*, p. 323. The initial letter of Kem-t, however, does not correspond to that of Ham (Kham), and the radical meaning of the latter, viewed as a Hebrew word, suggests rather a comparison with the name of the Egyptian god Khem (radical sense, warmth), who was said to have come from foreign countries, and more precisely from Punt, from the shores of the Red Sea (cf. Gen. x. 6, 'Mizraim and Put'). So Lefebure (*Transactions of Soc. of Bibl. Arch.*, ix. 170); and Lepsius is at least on the way to this conclusion, when he remarks that Ham (Kham) is radically connected with the Egyptian Khem 'to be warm,' and means 'the land

of the warm south' (Herzog, *Realencyclop.*, art. 'Aegypten').

54 **To yon mount,** &c., i.e. either to Mount Zion, by an anachronism; or, to the land of Canaan as a 'land of hills and valleys' (Deut. xi. 11). There is the same uncertainty in Ex. xv. 17, Isa. xi. 9, lvii. 13.

57 **Like a deceitful bow,** which does not respond to the archer's aim; so Hos. vii. 16.

60 **The habitation of Shiloh,** &c. Absorbed in love to the temple at Jerusalem, the psalmist hesitates to call this sanctuary a temple. An earlier writer had felt very differently (see 1 Sam. i. 9, and cf. Stanley, *Jewish Church*, i. 321). The scantiness of our information respecting it (due in all probability to the religious scruples of the later Biblical writers and editors) is much to be regretted. Note, however, that Jeremiah, as well as the psalmist, places the sanctuary of Shiloh in parallelism to the temple at Jerusalem (Jer. vii. 12). On this subject see references in my *Jeremiah: his Life and Times* (1888).

—**His pavilion,** &c. So Sept.; the text has 'the pavilion (tent) which he had pitched among men.' Targ. and Pesh. agree with Sept. as to the verbs.

61 **His own strength,** i.e. the ark; cf. cxxxii. 8, 1 Sam. iv. 21, 22.

63 **Were not praised in the song.** A poetic expression for 'were not given in marriage.' The noun derived from this verb (*hîl-lûlâ*) means 'marriage' (properly 'marriage-song') in Talmudic.²

65 On this 'boldness of speech,' cf. Binnie, *The Psalms, their History*, &c., pp. 218–20.—**Like a warrior,** or, 'like a valiant one' (*gibbôr*); cf. xxiv. 8.—**Who shouts from wine,** whose consciousness of power is heightened by wine. So Zech. x. 7.

¹ *Corpus Inscr. Semit.*, i. 1, p. 36, no. 10. It is doubtful, however, whether the title אֵשׁ אֵשׁ 'Arrow-flame' is correctly read. See Ganneau, *Revue critique*, 16 mai 1887, p. 395.

² So in Arabic *tahlil* is used with a secular (*Hamdsa*, p. 612, foot) as well as a religious reference (*ibid.* p. 315, v. 2); Wellhausen, *Skizzen*, Heft 3, pp. 108–9.

67 **The pavilion of Joseph,**
i.e. the Ephraimitish temple of
Shiloh (*v.* 60).

69 **Like the heavenly heights.**
Coæval, then, with the present
world (lxxxix. 3, 30, 38; cf. xlviiii.

9c). We have scarcely a right to
spiritualise with Delitzsch in order
to harmonise the psalmist with
Jeremiah (chap. vii.) On text, see
crit. note.

PSALM LXXIX.

A PSALM of complaint, closely parallel to Ps. lxxiv., except that here the destruction of the temple is referred to as an accomplished fact. Among phraseological points of contact, cf. lxxix. 5 with lxxiv. 1, 10; lxxix. 13 with lxxiv. 1; and perhaps (וְיָמֵינוּ) lxxix. 10 with lxxiv. 5. Both psalms stand in the same relation to the Jeremian literature, Ps. lxxiv. (see on *vv.* 4, 7, 9) containing reminiscences of Lam. ii. 6, 9, and Ps. lxxix. 6, 7 being a verbal quotation from Jer. x. 25. Both poems evidently belong to the same period.

The Huguenots often had this psalm upon their lips. At an earlier age, Dante had been charmed by its *dolce salmodia* (*Purg.* xxiii. 1), and interpreted its language of the low spiritual state of the Church; and long afterwards it expressed the feelings of sons and daughters of our own land during the Indian Mutiny. Nor must we forget that in the massacre of Alcimus (B.C. 162) the writer of 1 Macc. vii. 16, 17 finds a fulfilment of the second verse of our psalm. These varied applications prove the power of simply but nobly expressed feeling.

As a specimen of 'undesigned coincidence,' a few lines may be quoted from a penitential psalm (date at least 2300 B.C.) entitled by Mr. Pinches 'The Erechite's Lament over the Desolation of his Fatherland,'—

How long, my lady, shall the strong enemy hold thy sanctuary?
There is want in Erech, thy glorious city;
Blood is flowing like water in E-ulbar, the house of thy oracle.—
I mourn day and night like the wide fields.
I, thy servant, pray to thee,
Let thy heart take rest; let this anger be softened.¹

- 1 Elohim! heathen are come into thine inheritance;
they have defiled thy holy temple,
they have laid Jerusalem in heaps.
- 2 They have given the dead bodies of thy servants
as food unto the birds of the heaven,
the flesh of thy loving ones unto the beasts of the land.
- 3 They have shed their blood like water round about Jerusalem;
and there was none to bury them.
- 4 We are become a reproach to our neighbours,
a scorn and derision to them that are round about us.
- 5 How long, Jehovah, wilt thou be 'angry for ever'?
(how long) shall thy jealousy burn like fire?
- 6 Pour out thy wrath upon the nations that know thee not,
and upon the kingdoms that call not upon thy name.

¹ *Babylonian and Oriental Record*, Dec. 1886, pp. 22, 23 (also translated by Sayce).

- 7 For they have devoured Jacob,
and laid his homestead waste.
- 8 Remember not against us the iniquities of (our) ancestors ;
let thy compassions quickly come to meet us,
for we are brought very low.
- 9 Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of thy name ;
deliver us, and cancel our sins, for thy name's sake.
- 10 Wherefore do the heathen say, Where is their God ?
let vengeance for the spilt blood of thy servants
be showed among the heathen in our sight.
- 11 Let the groaning of the captive come before thee ;
according to the greatness of thine arm preserve thou the son
of death :
- 12 And pay back unto our neighbours sevenfold into their bosom
their insults wherewith they have insulted thee, O Lord.
- 13 So we that are thy people and the flock of thy shepherding
will give thee thanks for ever,
to many generations will we tell out thy praise.

1 **Heathen.** *Gōyīm* evidently has here a religious connotation (see *vv.* 10, 12, and cf. Lam. i. 10).

4 This verse is based on xliv. 13 ; cf. lxxx. 7.

5 On line 1 see notes on xiii. 2, lxxiv. 10 ; and on line 2 cf. Cant. viii. 6.

6, 7 Quoted from Jer. x. 25, and very possibly, as Bickell holds, substituted by a late editor for a line which had become illegible. For a similar case, see xxxi. 14. Certainly the words quoted are un-rhythmical.

8 **The iniquities of (our) ancestors.** The misery of the people is too great to be brought upon

them entirely by their own sins. In fact, like the other Asaphite psalmists, the writer feels that his people is, upon the whole, righteous.

10 *a* A favourite plea in liturgical poetry ; see cxv. 2, Joel ii. 17, and cf. xlii. 4.

11 Imitated in cii. 20 ; comp. Isa. xlii. 22, Zech. ix. 11. I take this to be a figurative description of the depressed state of the Jewish people.

12 **Into their bosom ;** comp. xxxv. 14, lxxxix. 50 (with note).

13 Prayer and praise, the only perfect sacrifices 'befitting' Jehovah's perfect protection (lxv. 2) See on l. 14.

PSALM LXXX.

A PRAYER for the restoration of God's favour to innocent but oppressed Israel, whose history is suggestively set forth under the allegory of a vine. Notice the brotherly love of Judah for Israel (cf. lxxvii. 16, lxxxi. 6), which is a reflexion (if we may expand the thought of the Asaphite psalmists in accordance with Jer. xxxi. 9, 20) of the fatherly love of Jehovah for his 'firstborn.' Man's self-will (Hos. v. 11) cannot permanently make void the divine idea of All-Israel. The psalm is in five strophes of eight lines each, the first and fifth of which have a refrain.

- 2 Shepherd of Israel, give ear,
 thou that ledest Joseph like a flock,
 Thou that art enthroned on the cherubim, shine forth
 before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh ;
- 3 Stir up thy heroic might,
 and come to our help !
- 4 Do thou, Elohim, restore us,
 cause thy face to shine, and we shall be saved.
- 5 Jehovah Sabáoth, how long
 wilt thou smoke against the prayer of thy people?
- 6 Thou hast fed them with the bread of tears,
 and given them a copious draught of tears to drink.
- 7 Thou makest us a strife unto our neighbours,
 and our enemies make their game of us.
- 8 Jehovah Sabáoth, do thou restore us,
 cause thy face to shine, and we shall be saved.
- 9 Thou didst bring a vine out of Egypt ;
 thou didst cast out the nations, and plant her in.
- 10 Thou didst clear a place before her ;
 and when she had taken root she filled the land.
- 11 The mountains were covered with the shadow thereof,
 and the cedars of God with her branches.
- 12 She spread out her boughs even unto the sea,
 and her shoots unto the river.
- 15 Jehovah Sabáoth, do but look again
 from heaven, behold and give heed to this vine,
 16 Even to the stock which thy right hand did plant,
 and to the leaves of the bough that thou didst choose thee.
- 13 Why hast thou broken down the fences thereof,
 so that all they that go by pluck off her grapes ?
- 14 The boar out of the wood doth rend it,
 and the roamers of the plain feed off it.
- 17 Burned with fire is it, and cut down !
 at the rebuke of thy face let them perish !
- 18 Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand,
 upon the son of man whom thou didst choose thee.
- 19 [Deliver us] and we will not go back from thee ;
 revive us, and we will call upon thy name.
- 20 Jehovah Sabáoth, do thou restore us ;
 cause thy face to shine, and we shall be saved.

2 **Shepherd of Israel.** See xlvi. 15, xlix. 24. Similar expressions occur in lxxix. 7 *b*, lxxxiii. 13 *b*, lxxviii. 52 (and cf. xxiii. 1), Gen.

and Prof. Sayce has indicated Babylonian parallels (*Hibbert Lectures*, p. 198). Line 2 is equivalent to 'Shepherd of Joseph;' how is this combination to be accounted for? Are the tribes of Joseph, or (see *v.* 3) the tribes which claim a common descent from Rachel, at present the true representatives and champions of the name of Israel? Or does not the psalmist rather pray that these tribes (or the remnant which claims to belong to them) may regain their ancient importance—or, more distinctly, that they may be brought back to colonise the north and strengthen Judah against the Samaritans?—**Thou that leddest.** The psalmist complains that the glorious Shepherd and Leader (cf. John x. 4) is no longer visible.—**Enthroned upon the cherubim.** Is there an allusion to the old custom of carrying the ark into battle? But the use of the same phrase in xcix. 1, 2 Kings xix. 15, shows that much more than this is intended (cf. on xxii. 4). It is not merely the national God who is to precede the three important Rachel-tribes like one 'valiant in battle' (xxiv. 8). He whom the psalmists ask to 'shine forth' as a sun is 'high over all the peoples' (xcix. 2); cf. 'from heaven,' *v.* 15.—**Before Ephraim, &c.**¹ Ephraim and Manasseh may well represent the northern kingdom, but why is Benjamin added, which both in extent and in population was so 'small' a tribe (lxviii. 28)? For two reasons: (1) because it had a hereditary attachment to Ephraim and Manasseh, which it proved as far as it could at the separation of the kingdoms; (2) because by right it contained the sanctuary, and hence claimed the proud title 'Jehovah's beloved' (Deut. xxxiii. 12).²

4 Restore us, i.e. restore prosperity to us. Or, 'bring us back (from exile).' So Targ. Such a prayer could of course only refer to

the Israelites who were still in exile, for the psalm is clearly written in Palestine.—**Cause thy face to shine.** See on iv. 7.

5 Jehovah Sabáoth. Strictly, 'Yahveh Çebáoth.' See on lix. 6.—**How long, &c.** Lit., 'how long hast thou smoked' (see on lxxiv. 1). The idiom means, 'How long shall I have to look back on this strange experience that *thou hast been angry?*'—**Against the prayer.** Or, 'in spite of the prayer.' Usage favours the view adopted (see lxxiv. 1, Heb.); and is the conception of God's being angry with a prayer unbiblical? See Isa. i. 15, Jer. xiv. 11, 12, and especially Lam. iii. 44, Isa. lviii. 4, lix. 2, Ecclus. xxv. 17. Lagarde would correct, 'against the remnant (of thy people).'

6 The bread of tears, i.e. either the bread which is eaten with tears, or, better, that which consists in tears (xlii. 4; comp. cii. 10).—**And given them, &c.** Or, 'and made them to drink (their) cup with tears.' The word rendered 'a copious draught'—it probably means a large cup or goblet—occurs again only in Isa. xl. 12, where it is clearly the third part of some larger measure such as the ephah, a very small measure for the dust of the earth, remarks Delitzsch, but a large one for tears. Here probably it means something like our 'quart' (cf. *triental*), or a cup holding this quantity. If sound allowed, we might render 'and given them a tierce of tears to drink.' Comp. Herrick, *Hesperides* (p. 227, Morley)—

Contemn to recommend a cruse,
But send to her a tierce.

9-12 A fine allegorical picture of Israel as a vine (comp. especially Isa. iii. 14, v. 1-7, Hos. x. 1, Gen. xlix. 22). The vine, the most precious of Israel's three royal plants (see Judg. ix. 8-13), seemed an apt emblem of God's people in its best

¹ Clericus rightly attaches these words to *v.* 2; and so Bickell.

² On the history of Benjamin, see Ewald, *History*, iv. 2; Geiger, *Jüdische Zeitschrift*, vii. 288, &c.

days (see Jer. ii. 21). Among the many suggestive peculiarities of the vine, our psalmist was struck by its capacity of bearing transplantation. For, like Hosea (xi. 1), he considers the history of Israel to begin in Egypt, where, as we know (in spite of Herod. ii. 76), the vine was largely cultivated (comp. Gen. xl. 9-11). The vine-emblem is common on Jewish coins,¹ and was nobly expressed in the colossal golden vine which hung, for the reception of golden gifts, in the porch of Herod's temple, spreading its branches under the cornices (Josephus, *Ant.* xv. 11, 3; comp. Mishna, *Middoth*, iii. 8). On the vine in the Bible, comp. Delitzsch's charming essay (transl. *Expositor*, 1886, i, p. 58, &c.)

11, 12 The 'mountains' represent the southern, the 'cedars of

God' (cf. 'the cedars in the garden of Elohim,' Ezek. xxxi. 8, and see on Ps. xxxvi. 7) the northern frontier; the 'sea' is of course the Mediterranean, and the 'river' the Euphrates, i.e. the western and eastern boundaries. Comp. the ideal description in Deut. xi. 24. Lebanon was famous for its wine (see on Hos. xiv. 7).

15, 16, 13, 14 Internal evidence strongly favours this transposition. The 'bough' (*v.* 16 *b*) is perhaps an allusion to Gen. xlix. 22 (see crit. note). The mention of the wild boar (*v.* 14) stands alone (but by a mere accident) in the O.T. — **Doth read it.** Sept. ἐλυμήνατο. So Callimachus, *Hymn to Diana*, 156; cf. Acts viii. 3.

18 **The man of thy right hand** (alluding to *v.* 16 *a*), i.e. the people of Israel.

PSALM LXXXI.

A COMBINATION of two distinct lyric passages (comp. xix., lxxvii., and especially xcv.)

- 2 Ring out your mirth unto Elohim our strength ;
shout for joy unto the God of Jacob.
- 3 Swell the melody, and sound the timbrel,
the pleasant lyre with the harp,
- 4 Blow the trumpet on the new moon,
at the full moon, for our festal day.
- 5 For this is a statute for Israel,
and an ordinance from the God of Jacob.
- 6 This he appointed in Joseph for a testimony,
when he went forth over the land of Egypt.

* * * * *

(Fragment of another Psalm.)

- [In a dream, in a vision of the night,
the discourse of one I had not known did I hear.]
- 7 'I removed his shoulder from the burden,
his hands escaped from the basket.
 - 8 Thou calledst in trouble, and I rescued thee,
I answered thee in (my) thunder-covert,
I proved thee at Meribah's waters.

¹ Levy, *Gesch. der jüd. Münzen*, pp. 133, 134; Madden, *Coins of the Jews*, pp. 116, 117, &c.

- 9 (I said), Hear, O my people, and I will protest unto thee,
O Israel, if thou wouldst but hearken unto me !
- 10 There shall no strange god be in thee,
neither shalt thou worship any foreign god.
- 11 I am Jehovah thy God,
who brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.
Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.
- 12 But my people hearkened not unto my voice,
and Israel was not compliant unto me. *would naught*
- 13 So I let them go in the obstinacy of their heart,
that they might walk in their own counsels.
- 14 O that my people were hearkening unto me ;
that Israel would walk in my ways !
- immediately* 15 Easily would I subdue their enemies,
and turn my hand against their foes.
- 16 The haters of Jehovah should cringe unto them,
that so their time might endure for ever ; *destruction*
- 17 And I would feed them with the fat of wheat,
and with honey out of the rock would I satisfy thee.'

2-6 a A summons to keep 'our festal day.' But which festival? Either the Passover, or the Feast of Booths, both of which had reference to the Exodus, and began on the day of the full moon. The feast of ingathering, however, as the autumn festival is called in the older legislation (Ex. xxiii. 16, xxxiv. 22), had originally no reference to the Exodus; it only receives this historical significance in Leviticus (xxiii. 39-43), whereas it is perfectly possible to hold that in the case of the feast of unleavened bread the reference to the Exodus was original.¹ The second line of v. 6 (see note) also favours the view that the latter is the festival intended. It is quite true that the Feast of Booths was always the favourite one, and that throughout the Old Testament (but not the New) it is distinguished by the title 'the feast' (see on Isa. xxx. 29). But one object of the promulgators of the Law and those who continued this work certainly was to enhance the importance of

the Passover. Observe that there is no allusion to any contemporary event; the observance of 'our feast' with all the pomp and circumstance of ritual is urged, simply on the ground of Mosaic institution. The summons is addressed in v. 2 to the people, in v. 3 to the Levites (comp. Ezra iii. 10, 2 Chr. v. 12, 13), and in v. 4 to the priests (comp. Num. x. 10, 2 Chr. vii. 6). On the musical celebration of the Passover in post-Exile times, see 2 Chr. xxx. 21, and comp. Delitzsch's essay on the ritual of the Passover in the time of the second temple, *Zeitschr. f. lutherische Theologie*, 1855.

4 The new moon was (probably from the earliest times; comp. 1 Sam. xx. 5) festally celebrated. Here, however (assuming the above view to be correct), it is mentioned in connection with the full moon of the month Abib or Nisan, at which the Passover was celebrated. The new moon at any rate of this month, as well as the full moon, was marked

¹ Comp. Prof. W. H. Green, *The Hebrew Feasts* (New York, 1885), p. 239.

apparently by the blowing of trumpets.

6 **In Joseph**, i.e. to be valid in northern as well as southern Israel (the restored tribes miss their fellow-tribes in exile; see on lxxx. 2). The text has, 'in Jehoseph' (see crit. note).—**When** (at the Exodus) **he** (viz. Israel and Joseph) **went forth from**, &c. The text has 'over' (or, 'against'); the Targum combines this with the reading which is presupposed by Sept. (ἐκ) and required by the facts of history. The text-reading seemed smoother to the scribe, who may perhaps also have recollected Gen. xli. 25.

6 b-17 The psalmist (who claims prophetic inspiration; cf. lxii. 12) communicates a revelation concerning Israel.

6 **The discourse . . . did I hear.** Hitzig and most recent critics (except Ewald) are on the right track when they find here a parallel to Job iv. 16. It is a mysterious way of expressing the superhuman nature of the speaker which we have in this clause; but then how can this half of the verse form a sequel to the first half? Olshausen wisely observes that something must have dropped out; the introduction to the oracle which follows cannot possibly be contained in these few dark words. One is forced to conjecture that two fragmentary passages have been combined in Ps. lxxx. which did not originally belong together. So too Bickell.

7 **The basket.** The basket in which the Israelites conveyed clay or baked bricks.

8 **In (my) thunder-covert.** This might be simply a poetical

detail, like xviii. 12; comp. Hab. iii. 4. But the context rather suggests a reference to the pillar of cloud and fire (Ex. xiii. 21), from out of which Jehovah answered the crying of the Israelites (Ex. xiv. 15).—**I proved thee**, viz. whether thou wouldest trust me after such a great mercy. There is a confusion of two narratives; comp. Ex. xvii. 6, 7, Num. xx. 13.

9 Jehovah reminds His people of addresses such as Deut. v. 1, vi. 3, iv. 26, xxx. 19, xxxi. 28.

10, 11 An abbreviation of Ex. xx. 2-6 = Deut. v. 6-11. Comp. Delitzsch in Luthardt's *Zeitschrift*, 1882, p. 289.

12, 13 Imitated apparently from Jer. vii. 24; comp. Deut. xxix. 19. In Jer. the obstinacy of the people is represented as self-caused, but here as the beginning of the divine judgment.

14-17 At this point the divine speaker turns more directly to the Israel of the psalmist's own time (comp. Driver, *Hebrew Tenses*, § 145). The foes of Israel were as powerful as ever, and the prospect of a permanent happiness seemed receding into the distance. Yet faith declares that this formed no part of Jehovah's plan for His people.—**That so their time**, &c. That they might be a 'never-exhausted people' (Jer. v. 15). To emend, 'their strength' (comp. Targum), does not on the whole make the text easier.

17 The imagery is selected from Deut. xxxii. 13, 14. It is, therefore, not ordinary wild honey, but a *utopian* product (comp. Job xxix. 6) that the poet describes in *v. 16 b*. 'The 'fat of wheat,' as cxlvii. 14. (On the tenses, see crit. note.)

PSALM LXXXII.

NO psalm makes a stronger demand than this on the historic imagination of the interpreter. The ideas may be perennial, but their outward forms are no longer understood. This is what the poet seems to say (comp. on Ps. lviii.) A crisis in the world's history has arrived, one of those 'days of Jehovah' of which the prophets tell—perhaps even that which will introduce the 'Messianic' age. The 'sons of the gods'

(strictly, of the Elohim) have come, as of yore, 'to present themselves before' the most High. In the midst of this assembly stands (cf. Isa. iii. 13) He who alone, by inherent right, is Elohim, and summons the divine but inferior beings to hear an expostulation and a warning of the gravest import. The charge brought against these patron-angels of the nations (see Dan. x.-xii.) is that they have (in the persons of their human subordinates) permitted such gross violence and injustice, that the moral bases of the earth are shaken. They cannot refute the charge, and therefore, although of divine nature, are threatened with the one great evil common to princes and peasants alike among their human subjects. The poem closes with an appeal to the true Elohim to convert this happy vision into a reality. 'Take thy great power and reign.'

Several points in the description seem at first sight inconsistent with the view that the Elohim are the angels. E.g., 1. The injustice and violence which *men* are said to suffer at their hands in judgment. But it is not 'judgment' in the narrower and ordinary sense which is meant, but rather the unjust oppression of one people by another. This oppression is attributed to the inferior Elohim, or angels, who are, according to the popular view (see on Ps. lviii.), the agents by whom God governs the world. The psalmist's reasoning is this. God ultimately governs the world. Yet there is injustice and oppression. Therefore this must be due to the negligence of the inferior Elohim through whom God acts. (Another poet has told us that 'He putteth no trust in His holy ones, and the heavens are not pure in His sight,' Job xv. 15.) 2. The threatened punishment of death. But, from a Biblical point of view, it is only the most High who is inherently immortal (comp. Hab. i. 12, according to the best reading). In Isa. xxiv. 21, 22 the celestial patrons of the earthly kings are represented as 'visited' (i.e. punished) for their offences; it is only a step further to say that this gross negligence has rendered them liable to deprivation of their supernatural character and consequently to death.

The idea that the Elohim are earthly potentates would, in my opinion, be admissible (see on xlv. 7) but for the context; they are expressly distinguished from mortal men in *v.* 7 (comp. lviii. 2); until the sentence had been pronounced, they were by God's favour non-mortal. Baudissin,¹ however, still maintains foreign potentates are meant, who called themselves gods or the sons of gods, and proposes thus to account for the language of *v.* 6. But does he thus account for it? The words of *v.* 6 are, 'I have said, Ye are gods.' In Ezek. xxviii. 2 (cf. Isa. xiv. 13, 14), which accurately expresses the ideas of heathen rulers, we find it written, 'Because . . . *thou* hast said, I am a god.'

To some extent this psalm and Ps. lviii. 2, 3 are parallel to Ps. xiv., where Jehovah is finely said to 'look down from heaven' upon the oppression of his people, but without any reference to celestial deputies. There is a more complete and very curious parallel in Cowley's 'Discourse by way of Vision' on Oliver Cromwell, where a strange and terrible angel claims to be the Almighty's deputy in the government of the three kingdoms, to which the poet replies, 'If it be so, Sir, it seems to me that for almost these twenty years past your highness has been absent from your charge' (*Essays*, ed. Lumby, pp. 24, 25). With Cowley this is a poetic fiction; not entirely so with the two psalmists, nor yet with the author of the Old Testament Apocalypse. 'Michael your prince,' however, in Dan. x. 21 (comp. xii. 1) is a good angel, but the psalmists too evidently indicate their dissatisfaction with the degenerate deputies of the most High.

¹ *Studien zur semitischen Religionsgeschichte*, i. 68.

- 1 Jehovah stands in a divine assembly ;
He judges amidst the gods.
- 2 'How long will ye judge unjustly,
and accept the person of wicked men ?
- 3 Redress the helpless and the orphan,
justify the afflicted and the poor.
- 4 Deliver the helpless and needy ;
rid them out of the hand of the wicked.'
- 5 'They are void of knowledge and understanding ;
they walk along in darkness ;
all the foundations of the earth are tottering.
- 6 I have said, Ye are gods,
and ye are all the sons of the most High ;
- 7 Nevertheless ye shall die like common men,
and fall like any of the princes.'
- 8 Arise, Elohim, judge the earth,
for thou shalt possess thyself of all the nations.

1 Jehovah. It would be too great reverence for a mere collector and editor of psalms to retain 'elōhim. Can such a word have been used in two senses in two successive lines?—**A divine assembly.** Lit., 'an assembly of God' (Heb. 'ēl), i.e. one summoned and presided over by the most high God ('ēl 'elyōn). In lxxiv. 2 the Israelites are called 'Jehovah's assembly (or, congregation)'; here, however, the angels are meant (Pesh. actually gives *malākē* 'angels' in both lines of *v.* 1).—

Amidst the gods (as *v.* 6). It would be confusing to adopt, here and in lxxxix. 7, xcvi. 7, the Hebrew term Elohim, or, in xxix. 1, lviii. 2, Elim, the former being sometimes used as a virtual synonym for Jehovah, and the latter unfamiliar to the English reader. Otherwise I would gladly imitate those Indianists who adopt the word Dēva in speaking of a god who is not eternal. Comp. οἱ δὲ σύμμαχοι Ἰλου, τοῦ Κρόνου, Ἐλωείμ ἐπεκλήθησαν (Philo Bybl. ap. Euseb. *Præf. Ev.* i. 10).

2 How long, &c. The cry of the impatient Jehovah (cf. Ex. x. 3, xvi. 28, Num. xiv. 11, 27).

5 An indignant aside from the Judge, scarcely (as Ewald and Hitzig) from the poet.

6 Who is the speaker here? Is it the poet who sarcastically quotes the grand title claimed by the kings of the earth only to deny its justice and predict its falsification? Or is it the Most High who refers to his previous gift of a real though inferior divinity, and cancels it? I prefer, of course, the latter view.—**Sons of the most High.** Not in the sense in which the Phœnician Eliūn has children (Philo Byblius, as above). 'Sons' here = members of a college or guild (comp. 'sons of the prophets'). Jehovah and the inferior, dependent Elohim form together a company or college of superhuman beings (comp. Gen. i. 26, ii. 22); Jehovah, as the supreme head, is fitly called Elyōn 'the most High' (see on vii. 18), just as the king of Israel is ideally described as 'most High (in reference) to the kings of the earth' (see on lxxxix. 28).

7 Ye shall die. Why not indeed? For the final cause of an angel's existence is to be an interpreter and instrument of the divine will. The idea of an independent

angelic personality is strictly speaking inconsistent with the religion of Jehovah. To disobey is to die (comp. Gen. ii. 17; Adam too has at first no independent personality).

8 The poet sees not as yet those

things which by faith he anticipates. Cf. *Psalm. Sol.* xi. 9. He appeals to the essential Elohim (Jehovah) to put down injustice and its instruments, and to take the government of the world into his own hands.

PSALM LXXXIII.

A PASSIONATE cry towards heaven in response to the foe in *v.* 5. See Julius Hammer's noble version.

- 2 Elohim, be not silent,
hush thee not, neither be still, O God.
- 3 For, lo, thine enemies make a roaring,
and they that hate thee have lifted up the head :
- 4 They make a wily plot against thy people,
and conspire against thy treasured ones :
- 5 They have said, 'Come, and let us extinguish them as a people
and let the name of Israel be mentioned no more.'
- 6 For they have conspired with one accord,
and are confederate against thee :
- 7 The tents of Edom and of the Ishmaelites,
Moab and the Hagarenes ;
- 8 Gebal, and Ammon, and Amalek,
Philistia, with them that dwell at Tyre ;
- 9 Asshur also has joined himself to them ;
they have been an arm to the children of Lot.
- 10 Deal with them as with Midian,
as with Sisera, as with Jabin at the torrent of Kishon.
- 11 They were destroyed at Endor,
they became as dung for the ground.
- 12 Make their nobles like Oreb and like Zeëb,
and like Zebah and Zalmunna all their princes,
- 13 Who have said, 'Let us take to ourselves
The homesteads of God in possession.'
- 14 My God, make them like unto whirling dust,
and as the stubble before the wind ;
- 15 As the fire that burns the forest,
and as the flame that licks bare the mountains ;
- 16 So pursue them with thy storm,
and with thy hurricane confound them ;
- 17 Fill their face with dishonour,
that they may seek thy name, Jehovah.

- 18 Let them be put to shame and confounded for ever,
yea, let them be abashed and perish,
19 And let them know that thou, even thou only,
art the most High over all the earth.

4 **Thy treasured ones** (as xxvii. 5, xxxi. 21). The verb *çāfan* (prop. 'to hide') seems to have the special sense of treasuring up as something precious and inviolable in religious phraseology. So xxvii. 5, xxxi. 21; comp. Ezek. vii. 22, *çfāni* 'my treasure,' i.e. the temple; also the proper name *Çefanya* (Zephaniah) 'Yahvè treasures,' and in Phœnician *Çefunbaal* 'Baal's treasure' (Euting, *Punische Steine*, p. 10).

5 It was an attempt to destroy the Jewish nationality (comp. lxxiv. 8). Can we help thinking of 1 Macc. i. 50, 'And whosoever would not do according to the king's commandment, he should die'?

7-9 Six of the ten ethnic names in this passage occur in the remarkable fifth chapter of 1 Maccabees. There remain the Hagarenes, Gebal, Amalek, and Asshur. The first of these occurs in Tiglath Pileser II.'s list of Aramæan tribes,¹ and in the Chronicler's account of early Israelitish history (1 Chr. v. 10, 19, 20, xi. 38, xxvii. 31). The second is found nowhere else in the Bible, except indeed as the name of a Phœnician city (Ezek. xxvii. 9), but is the equivalent of Seir in the Targums, and was known to Josephus as, in ancient times, the designation of a part of Idumæa (*Ant.* ii. 1, 2, ix. 9, 1). There is no reason why both names and tribes should not have lasted on till the Maccabæan times. It is otherwise, however, with the third name Amalek, the Amalekitish race, so greatly weakened by David, having been finally destroyed (as it would seem) in the

time of Hezekiah (1 Chron. iv. 42, 43). The case of the fourth name is peculiar. Asshur, it is true, had no longer an independent existence, but the name survived, and was by a natural licence applied to the successors to the position of Assyria; Babylon is called Asshur in 2 Kings xxiii. 29, Jer. ii. 18, Lam. v. 6, Persia in Ezra vi. 22; and the square Hebrew character now in use was anciently styled 'Assyrian (that is, Syrian²) writing.' 'Asshur' might therefore (as according to some in Isa. xix. 23-25, xxvii. 13, Zech. x. 11) mean Syria, but that the name occurs so late in the list. The admissible alternatives are to emend 'Asshur' into 'Geshur' (on the analogy of 2 Sam. ii. 9; see Var. Bible), or to suppose that the poet introduces the name of Israel's long-fallen foe for effect. Something may be said for either view. In 1 Macc. v. 44 Judas is said to have driven his defeated enemies to Karnaim, which would be in the Geshurite country. To me, however, this does not prove that Geshur was a member of the hostile confederacy, and on the other hand a striving after effect is plainly visible in the violent imagery and as startling imprecations which conclude the psalm. — **The children of Lot** (cf. Deut. ii. 9), i.e. the Moabites and Ammonites. This is the only reference to Lot outside the Pentateuch (comp. Ewald, *History*, ii. 312).

17 **That they may seek thy name.** How do this statement and that in v. 19 agree with the imprecations of everlasting ruin? Evidently the latter are exagge-

¹ Friedr. Delitzsch, *Wo lag das Paradies* § p. 238.

² Captain Conder has denied the derivation of Syria from Assyria (*Expositor*, 1886, i. p. 323). But see Herod. vii. 63, Justin, i. 2, 13, and comp. Hitzig's article 'Assyrien' in Schenkel's *Bibel-Lexicon* (i. 267), Stade, *Zeitschr. f. d. alttest. Wissenschaft*, 1882, p. 292, Ryssel, art. 'Syrien' in Herzog-Plitt's *Realencyclopädie*, xv. 168, 169, and especially Nöldeke's arguments in *Hermes*, v. 443-468.

rated expressions. The poet's real desire is that of Hezekiah in Isa. xxxvii. 20, 'that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou art Jehovah, even thou only.' He does not wish Israel's enemies to die before the logic of facts has compelled them to own Jehovah as their God. Or shall we say that the conflicting phraseology corresponds to conflicting feelings within the poet's breast? He would gladly see these men recognising Jehovah's power and seek-

ing His name. Failing this, let their lot be destruction! For similar inconsistencies, see xviii. 42, 43, 45, lix. 12, 14.

19 **That thou, even thou only, &c.** The nature of the one true God seemed to the Second Isaiah to be adequately expressed by 'Jehovah.' To other writers the archaic name Elyōn seemed a useful synonym, as conveying a self-evident reference to the divine transcendence and universal sovereignty (see on vii. 18, xci. 1).

PSALM LXXXIV.

THE notes of the singer of Pss. xlii., xliii. (cf. lxiii.) are here transposed into a different key. It is still 'Te saluto, te suspiro,' but no longer 'De longinquo te saluto' (to quote Hildebert). Who can be surprised that Columba delighted in it (comp. on Ps. xxxiv.)?

- 2 How lovely is thy habitation,
 Jehovah Sabáoth !
- 3 My soul longs, yea, even pines
 for the courts of Jehovah ;
My heart and my flesh ring out their joy
 unto the living God.
- 4 Even as the sparrow finds a house,
 and the swallow a nest,
 Where she lays her callow brood,
 [so have I found, even I,
 A home] by thine altars,
 O my King and my God.
- 5 Happy are they that dwell in thy house !
 they can be always praising thee.
- 6 Happy the man who has thee for a stronghold,
 [such as are pilgrims on] the highways
 [with gladness] in their heart !
- 7 Passing through the balsam-vale,
 they make it a source of fountains ;
 yea, the early rain mantles it with blessings :
- 8 They go from strength to strength,
 and shall appear before God in Zion.
- 9 Jehovah Sabáoth, hear thou my prayer ;
 give ear, O God of Jacob.
- 10 Behold, Elohim, our shield,
 and regard the face of thine anointed.

- 11 For better is a day in thy courts
than a thousand [spent abroad] ;
I would rather be at the threshold in the house of my God,
than dwell in the tents of ungodliness.
- 12 For Jehovah Elohim is a sun and shield,
Jehovah gives grace and glory ;
no good thing will he withhold
from them that walk blamelessly.
- 13 Jehovah Sabáoth, happy is the man
who trusts in thee !

3 **My soul longs.** Or, 'my soul hath longed.' But the second verse half proves that the state in which the psalmist's past longings resulted continues in the present. Presumably he is a pilgrim whose 'feet stand at last within the gates of Jerusalem' (cxxii. 2). Observe, 'the courts' = the temple, as lxxv. 5, xcii. 14. Even if the author be a priest, he writes for the laity.—**My heart and my flesh**, i.e. my whole nature ; comp. lxiii. 2.—**Ring out their joy** ; for the pilgrim can now expect to have his 'thirst for the living God' (xlii. 3) satisfied. It is the 'clamor mentis intimæ' of the hymn of St. Bernard.

4 'Birds seek out a quiet place for their nests ; a like sense of security is mine in the neighbourhood of God's altars.' The figure is analogous to that in xlii. 2. Observe that when the lower animals are referred to in the Old Testament for their own sakes, nobler thoughts respecting them are suggested than when they merely supply a figure to a hymn-writer. Comp., for instance, xlii. 2 with Joel i. 20, Ps. civ. 21, 27 ; and comp. our present passage with the oath of the Arab poet an-Nábigha,¹ 'By Him who gives security to the birds which take refuge with Him, against which brush without harming them the riders of Mekkah as they pass

through the coverts where they dwell !' Writers desirous of edification feel that they would weaken the point of their comparisons if they represented the humbler 'folk' as in direct relation to God. But we must now pass on to the received text, which is not that translated above (see crit. note). It is familiar to all, and suggests a different view of the figure of the bird. This is taken to be its meaning : 'If even birds love to build their nests in the sacred precincts, how much more reason has the believing heart to find its home in the house of its God !' Plausible enough, I admit, at first sight, especially if we may illustrate by lii. 10, xcii. 14 (where some critics find an allusion to a custom of planting trees in the outer court of the temple). For the sacredness of life within the Haram or *τέμενος* was as much a Semitic as a Hellenic idea, and we find an Arab poet ('Amr ibn al-Ĥârith) saying, at the close of a bitter lamentation on his exile from Mecca—

And we weep for the House whose pigeon
is unhurt,
Taking the shade therein securely, where
too are the sparrows,²

a passage which reminds us of a striking anecdote in Herodotus (i. 159). Many critics since Bochart have supposed the psalmist to al-

¹ Quoted by Lyall, *Ancient Arabian Poetry*, p. xxviii.

² Schultens, *Monumenta Vetusiora Arabiae*, 1740, pp. 1-9 ; comp. crit. note. The context, however, suggests that the poet may be thinking of the entire sacred territory (of Mecca), in which case we may compare an-Nábigha as quoted above. Mohammed himself reaffirmed the sacredness of Mecca (see Wellhausen s *Vakidi*, p. 338).

lude to a similar belief on the part of the Israelites. So too Mr. Holman Hunt, as we may infer from his great picture of 'The Finding in the Temple,' and Dr. Tristram, who remarked many kinds of birds on the trees and in chinks of the walls of the Haram area (*The Land of Israel*, pp. 185-187). Still I hesitate to follow, chiefly because the exegetical view which Bochart's decision presupposes is not adequate to the requirements of the passage. Surely a direct appeal to God by His personal name implies the direct personal reference of the context to the poet, without which, it may be added, the object of the image of the bird is obscure, and the transition of thought in the next verse abrupt. An ancient Jewish scholar (see Ibn Ezra's note) long ago noticed that the clause was incomplete; but the parallels adduced by Glassius for an ellipsis¹ are inadequate. Not only the sense but the rhythm require us to suppose a lacuna in the text. Can we venture to fill this up? Glassius understands (from *vv.* 3, 4 *a*), 'My soul longeth to find;' but surely we want something beyond the longing expressed in *v.* 3. The poet is not worse off than the birds; he has found, and now hopes to enjoy, that which he has so longed for.

5 The pilgrim who has just reached the goal of his wishes congratulates those who are still better off than himself (contrast *Isa.* xxxiii. 14). 'Dwelling in Jehovah's house' is evidently not to be explained as in xxxii. 6, if this is a pilgrim-song. The speaker envies those who can be always praising God—the ministers of the temple, which he regards as predominantly the house of praise (comp. *xxii.* 4, *Isa.* lxiv. 11).

6-8 Perhaps a reply from those who 'dwell in God's house.' The pilgrim limits the conditions of happiness too much. All who trust in God, and more especially such as

(in Bunyan's language) 'love to go on pilgrimage' is equally fortunate.

—**Who have thee for a fortress.** For the phrase comp. *Isa.* xxvi. 4, and for a link between this part of the verse and the next, comp. xxviii. 7.—[**They go as pilgrims on the highways, &c.** The received text must be rendered, '(even) they in whose heart are highways.' What is the key-idea to this obscure phrase? Is it to be sought in *Prov.* xvi. 17? If so the meaning is, 'those who love to think on God's commandments.' Or in *Jer.* xxxi. 21? If so, we may paraphrase with Ewald, 'who are fain to think on pilgrimages.' Or in the immediate context which refers to the subjective miracles of faith? If so, Segond is right in rendering, 'Ils trouvent dans leur cœur des chemins tout tracés.' The Sept. favours the second view (*ἀναβάσεις ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ αὐτοῦ*), which is perhaps the easiest. But even this view requires so much to be understood that, considering the fulness and lucidity of style which characterises the poem, it is safest to question the soundness of the text. The alternatives therefore are either to emend one word (*ἡσῖλόθ*), rendering 'in whose heart is confidence,' or (since *kislōth* 'confidence' does not occur in the Hebrew texts, and the psalmist says 'their heart,' not 'his heart') to supply somewhat as proposed above, in accordance with Bickell.² I prefer the latter. The context shows that pilgrimage, real and not imagined, is in the writer's mind; *v.* 6 must be so expressed as to prepare the way for *vv.* 7, 8. Observe the parallel, not without its contrasts in *Isa.* xxxv. 8-10 (I venture to assume my own view).

7 **The balsam-vale.** The Sept. (Aquila, Jerome, Peshitto) has 'the valley of weeping,' and is followed by Hengstenberg and Hupfeld. The bitter waters of Marah are sweetened once more, becomes the meaning. This is either a guess or

¹ *Philologia Sacra*, col. 1224.

² Unfortunately Bickell has since gone over to the first alternative.

a various reading; it is more natural to compare 2 Sam. v. 24, 1 Chr. xiv. 14, 15, where *b'kām* or 'baka-trees' are mentioned. These are generally identified with the balsam-trees, which abound in the arid valley of Mecca, and which receive their name (Ar. *b'kā*) from the resin which 'weeps' or drops from their bark. In Judg. ii. 1 we find a place called Bochim, which the Sept. renders by the same word¹ given here for *bākā* and in 2 Sam. *l.c.* for *b'kām*. It is probable therefore that various places in Palestine were named from the baka-trees which grew there, and though the balsam-tree of Mecca may not now be found in Palestine, yet either it or some tree resembling it may once have grown there in arid districts. A hot, dried up valley in which only baka-trees would grow is an apt emblem of the drawbacks of literal pilgrimage. There may be also a half-conscious reference to the trials of that 'sojourning' which pilgrimage symbolises (Gen. xlvii. 9). — **They make it, &c.** Reminding us of Isa. xxxv. 7, xli. 18; only those passages (if my exposition is correct) belong to prophecies of the blissful outward condition of the restored Jews, whereas this describes the inward subjective miracles wrought by faith. Each pilgrim has a staff of Moses to draw water from the rock. The **early rain** is equally metaphorical. The **blessings** in the figure are a luxuriant vegetation (Isa. xxxv. 1, 7); in the application, the flowers of the inner landscape, faith, hope, and love.

8 Fatigue is banished by the prospect of 'appearing before God in Zion.' So the prophet of the Return assures us that believers shall renew their youth (Isa. xl. 30, 31). The form of the phrase reminds us of Jer. ix. 2, John i. 16.

9, 10 Is this the prayer of the pilgrim-band on its arrival? Or, the first gush of the writer's enthu-

siasm having been exhausted, does he complete his work by some rhythmical but ill-connected verses? The latter will be more probable, if we grant that the psalms have often been enlarged and adapted to liturgical use. Several thoughts are in the writer's mind, and he embodies them in successive quatrains. One is religious loyalty to the king or high priest. Another, suggested by the original lyric, is the incomparable delights of God's house. A third is the completeness of the believer in his God. The first of these thoughts to arise in the psalmist's mind is that of loyalty to Israel's earthly head, and he clothes this thought in the language of prayer. But who, more precisely, is Jehovah's **anointed**? Is it the king, the high priest, or the nation as a whole? If the psalm (or the passage) be of post-Exile date, either of the two latter is admissible. The transference of the Messianic promises from the king to the church-people of Israel is expressly announced by the great prophet of the Return (Isa. lv. 3); and there are some plausible grounds of internal evidence for Hitzig's view that in lxxxix. 39 (comp. Hab. iii. 13 and perhaps Ps. xxviii. 3) 'Jehovah's anointed one' is the people of Israel. But a reference to the high priest is here certainly more probable. In Lev. iv. 3, 5 the phrases 'the priest' and 'the anointed' are in apposition, and in Zech. vi. 11 crowns are set upon the head of Joshua the high priest.

10 **Our shield**, in apposition to Elohim, as the position of the words and the accents suggest (comp. lix. 12, xxxiii. 20), not the object to 'behold' as a synonym for 'king' (in spite of lxxxix. 19).

11 The first line of this verse cannot without some artificial hypothesis be connected with v. 10. Either then we must place v. 11 elsewhere, and most naturally after v. 3 (as Bickell, following out a

¹ In Judg. ii. 5, Sept. (Cod. Vat.) gives *Κλαυθμῶνες*, not *Κλαυθμῶν*, as in v. 1 (comp. Bleek's *Einleitung*, ed. Wellhausen, p. 183). The plural is of course a more exact equivalent of the Hebrew.

suggestion of Ibn Ezra), or we must explain as in the preceding note. The idea is that of *vv.* 2-8; only it is expressed in more prosaic language. (Observe that the plural form of *רָצַח* in *v.* 11 is different from that in *v.* 3, which scarcely favours the view that these verses once stood consecutively.)—**Be at the threshold.** The poet would rather be the humblest of the guests of Jehovah than dwell at ease among the heathen. He has the spirit of the publican (Luke xviii. 13), and the Sept. has happily caught the meaning of the phrase with its *ἐξελεξάμην παραρπίτθισθαι*. There is hardly an allusion to the Korahite office of 'keepers of the thresholds' (1 Chron. ix. 19; cf. Jer. lii. 24); the poet is too humble-minded to covet such an honourable office,¹ nor indeed is it of the actual temple that he is thinking at the moment, but of an imagined house of which Jehovah is the hospitable master (comp. xxiii. 5, 6). Del. infers from the parallelism of 'Jehovah's house' and 'tents of ungodliness' that the temple itself was not yet built. Others may think that the tone

of the psalm implies a long-established temple-ritual, and that 'tents' is only a poetical expression for 'habitations' (cf. cxviii. 15, cxxxii. 3).

12 **A sun and shield.** Here only is Jehovah directly said to be a shield. Indirectly He is oftener so styled; see especially Isa. lx. 19, 20, and notice that all the lovely things said by Babylonian psalmists of Samas the Sun-god (Sayce, *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 100) are claimed by Hebrew psalmists for Jehovah. By the figure of the shield this verse seems connected with *v.* 9. Divine grace is here viewed, however, not in relation to the people of Israel (as *v.* 9), but to individual believers; comp. xxviii. 7, v. 12. The Sept. appears to read differently—'For the Lord loveth mercy and truth; God will give grace and glory;' but this is really a paraphrase suggested by xci. 4 *b*, lxxxv. 11. Observe: Jehovah is not merely a 'shield,' but a 'sun' (cf. Eccles. xlii. 16); He not merely gives gracious, condescending protection, but a reflexion of His own 'glory' (see on lxxxv. 10).

PSALM LXXXV.

JOYOUS praise passing abruptly into unsatisfied longing (cf. cxxvi. 1-3, 4-6). It seemed at first as if God's anger were removed, but there is still too much need to pray, 'Return to us' (comp. on cxviii. 25). Jehovah answers with words of peace (comp. on lxii. 12).

- 2 Jehovah, thou hadst become favourable unto thy land,
thou hadst turned the fortune of Jacob :
- 3 Thou hadst forgiven the iniquity of thy people,
thou hadst covered all their sin :
- 4 Thou hadst gathered in all thy fury,
thou hadst turned from thy hot anger.
- 5 Restore us, God of our salvation,
and withdraw thine indignation toward us.
- 6 Wilt thou be angry with us for ever ?
wilt thou stretch out thine anger unto all generations ?

¹ One need not raise the question as to the position of the door-keepers *before* the Exile. This is undoubtedly a post-Exile psalm.

- 7 Wilt thou not revive us again,
that thy people may rejoice in thee?
8 Make us to see thy lovingkindness, Jehovah,
and vouchsafe to grant us thy salvation.
9 Let me hear what God, Jehovah, will speak ;
surely he will speak peace to his people and to his loving ones,
to those that have turned their hearts toward him.
10 Yea, near is his salvation to them that fear him,
that glory may dwell in our land :
11 Lovingkindness and truth are met together,
righteousness and peace have kissed each other :
12 Truth springs out of the earth,
and righteousness looks down from heaven :
13 Jehovah shall give all that is good,
and our land shall yield her increase.
14 Righteousness shall walk before him,
and shall make his footsteps a way.

2 **Turned the fortune.** See crit. note on xiv. 7.

5 **Restore us,** i.e., restore good fortune to us (see *v.* 2, and cf. lxxx. 4). Or, 'return to us,' as if Jehovah had departed in anger (Isa. lxiii. 17).—**Withdraw.** The text has 'break ;' see on lxxxix. 34.

9-14 In *v.* 9 the psalmist introduces himself as a prophet (cf. lxii. 12, Hab. ii. 1), and in *v.* 10, &c., gives a free reproduction of the revelation which he has received (comp. lxii. 12, lxxxi. 6, &c.) It is a lovely allegory.

9 **To his people,** &c. The *khasidim* and the people are identified here as in l. 4, 5. It is the church-nation, therefore, which is meant (cf. lxxxvi. 2), excluding mockers and unbelievers.—**To those,** &c. The text runs, 'and let them not turn again to self-confidence' (see on xlix. 14). This requires us to prefix in thought, 'to his word of peace let them hold fast,' or the like ; the juxtaposition of the two lines, as they stand, is far from probable. But we cannot prefix all this in thought, and the Sept. seems to have read differently. See crit. note.

10 **That glory may dwell,** &c. What glory? The true Shechinah ;

the manifested presence of Israel's God. Comp. the prophet's song to glorified Zion, Isa. lx. 1, 2. This illustrates lxxxiv. 12.

11 **Lovingkindness and truth,** &c. A.V.'s 'mercy and truth' (so Sept.) effaces the connexion between *v.* 11 and *v.* 9. God's 'lovingkindness' is once more revealed to his 'duteously loving ones.' Comp. this passage with Jer. ix. 24 (note), not forgetting also Milton's fine application of *vv.* 11, 12 in stanza xv. of the poem on the Nativity—

Yea, Truth and Justice then, &c.

It is not, however, *only* God's 'lovingkindness and truth' which are meant, but the fundamental virtues of a divinely sanctioned human morality. These virtues are finely represented as angels in human form (comp. on lxi. 8, lxxxix. 14), which wander delightedly about the places of concourse (contrast Isa. lix. 14, 15). 'Truth,' by a change of metaphor, is also described as a plant (comp. Isa. xlv. 8).

13 Next to these spiritual gifts, the greatest blessing to be hoped for is that of fruitful seasons. The same transition is made in Hos. ii. 21, 22 (Heb. 23, 24), and the fer-

tility of the land is a constant feature of Messianic descriptions.

14 **Righteousness** may here have the meaning of prosperity (regarded as a righteous gift of the covenant-God). So, e.g., in Isa.

xli. 2, lviii. 8, both which passages resemble this verse in phraseology. The last line is also rendered, 'and shall give heed to the way of his steps.' The pronoun in any case refers to Jehovah.

PSALM LXXXVI.

A PRAYER in time of persecution, expressing the tender and spiritual aspirations, not of one great original mind, but of the average members of the Church, whose memories were stored with the touching phrases of earlier psalms. In *v.* 9 we find a singularly distinct prophecy of the conversion of the nations (cf. xxii. 27, lxxv. 3, and especially lxxxvii.), based on the fact that all alike (not Israel alone) are Jehovah's creation. What a sweet humility, moreover, breathes in *v.* 16, and what an earnest belief in Providence in *v.* 17!

- 1 Incline thine ear, Jehovah, and answer me,
for I am afflicted and needy.
- 2 Preserve my soul, for I am duteous in love ;
save thy servant, O thou my God,
who trusts in thee.
- 3 Have pity on me, O Lord,
for unto thee do I cry all the day.
- 4 Gladden the soul of thy servant,
for unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.
- 5 For thou, Lord, art good and forgiving,
and rich in lovingkindness to all that call upon thee.
- 6 Give ear, Jehovah, unto my prayer,
and attend to the voice of my supplications.
- 7 In the day of my trouble I call upon thee,
for thou wilt answer me.
- 8 There is none like thee among the gods, O Lord,
and no works are like thine.
- 9 All nations whom thou hast made
shall come and worship before thee, O Lord,
and shall glorify thy name.
- 10 For thou art great and doest wondrous things,
thou art God alone.
- 11 Teach me thy way, Jehovah, and I will walk in thy truthfulness :
so shall my heart rejoice to fear thy name.
- 12 I will thank thee, O Lord my God, with all my heart,
and glorify thy name for ever ;
- 13 For great is thy lovingkindness towards me,
and thou hast rescued my soul from the nether Hades.

- 14 O God, the proud have risen up against me,
and a crew of violent ones have sought my soul,
and have not set thee before them.
- 15 But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion and pity,
longsuffering, and rich in lovingkindness and truth :
- 16 Turn thee unto me, and have pity upon me ;
give thy strength unto thy servant,
and save the son of thy handmaid.
- 17 Work in my behalf some token for good,
that they who hate me may see it and be ashamed,
because thou, Jehovah, hast helped me and comforted me.

2 **Dutecous in love** (Heb. *khāsīd*; see on v. 8, xvi. 10). The psalmist is one of those who have renewed 'the kindness (*khēsed*) of Israel's youth, the love of her espousals,' Jer. ii. 2. The phrase has lost its colouring in A.V. and R.V. Comp. on lxxxv. 9.—**Thy servant.** Comp. v. 16 and see on xix. 12.

5 **Forgiving.** Sept. ἐπιεικής. The adj. (Heb. *šallākh*) is an ἄπ. λεγ., but the verb is common. Cf. the Heb. of cxxx. 4 a. The forgivingness of Jehovah impressed itself strongly on the church-nation. A similar stage was reached by Babylonian religion in Nebuchadnezzar's time, when *riminu* 'compassionate' (cf. *rakhūm*, v. 15) became a standing epithet of Mero-dach (cf. Sayce, *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 98).

8-10 These verses must be taken together. At first sight they seem to go beyond xxxv. 10, inasmuch as sole divinity is claimed for Jehovah. But the other psalmist, if a student of Jeremiah, would have granted that Jehovah was supreme among the supernatural powers also called Elohim, whom He had it in His power to 'punish' (Jer. xlvi. 25).

11 **So shall my heart rejoice,** &c. Sept. εὐφρανθήτω ἡ καρδία (followed by Pesh., Vulg.); so rightly Grätz and Bickell. A fine expression clothing as fine an idea. The nations which knew not Jehovah shall be driven to fear Him (xviii. 45, 46, lxxxiii. 16, 17); but sa

for His own people, whom He leads like sheep, they rejoice to fear His name. The printed text has, 'Unite my heart,' which is usually taken to mean 'Concentrate my powers and affections on thy service' (cf. St. Augustine, *Conf.* i. 3, 1, ii. 1, 1, and Ken's Morning Hymn). So Calvin, and among the moderns Hupfeld, who compares Jer. xxxii. 39, where, however, the petition for the gift of 'one heart' is expressly offered in the name of a collective body, whereas the petitioner in the present psalm is in a secondary sense the people of Israel, but primarily a representative pious Israelite. It is simpler and gives not less worthy sense to read and render with the Septuagint.

13 **The nether Hades** (Sheól). So Deut. xxxii. 22. Not as if there were several divisions of Hades (see on lxxviii. 12); the phrase simply means 'Hades which is below the earth' (see on lxiii. 10, and comp. Phil. ii. 10, R.V. marg., 'things of the world below'). See my note on Isa. v. 14.

15 **Full of compassion and pity,** &c. An echo of Ex. xxxiv. 6; cf. ciii. 8, cxi. 4, cxii. 4 (?), cxvi. 5, cxlv. 8, lxxviii. 38. Vulg. has, 'Et tu, Domine Deus, miserator et misericors, patiens, et multæ misericordiæ, et verax.' Mark the singular poverty of this phraseology (only in part due to Sept.), which is reflected in our Wycliffite version of 1388 (notice, however, Purvey's fine word 'sothe-

fast'). The Vulgate rendering of the parallel passage, Ex. xxxiv. 6, is but slightly richer. No wonder that the Manichæans turned 'miserum cor' to account in their warfare against the Old Testament (see Trench's *Synonyms of the New Testament*, p. 197).

17 **Work in my behalf**, &c.

He asks not necessarily for a miracle, but for a providential sign of God's favour towards him. Compare Nehemiah's phrase, 'the good hand of my God upon me' (Neh. ii. 8, 18). 'For good' (i.e. in my interest) is a favourite phrase in Ezra and Nehemiah (Ezra viii. 22, Neh. v. 19, xiii. 31).

PSALM LXXXVII.

THE Church of Israel expanding into the Church Universal. But for its obscurity, this would surely be among the most inspiring lyrics in the Psalter. And yet, when read in the light of xxii. 28-32, Isa. xix. 18-25, Zeph. iii. 9, 10, Isa. xlv. 3-5, xlv. 14, what a noble monument of the influence of prophetic hopes it becomes! Calvin among the interpreters seems to have been fascinated by it. It is very possible that the psalmist's faith may have been stimulated by the accession of proselytes which seems to have taken place after the Restoration (see Isa. lvi. 1-8, a post-Exile passage?). On the psalm as a whole, comp. Briggs, *Messianic Prophecy*, pp. 226-228.

- 1 His foundation upon the holy mountains,
- 2 Yea, the gates of Zion Jehovah loves
more than all the dwellings of Jacob.
- 3 Honourable things are spoken of thee,
thou city of God.
- 4 'Rahab and Babylon I proclaim my votaries ;
behold Philistia and Tyre with Ethiopia—
this one was born there.'
- 5 And concerning Zion it shall be said,
'Each and every one was born in her ;'
and he, the most High, shall stablish her.
- 6 Jehovah shall reckon, when he writes down the peoples,
'This one was born there.'
- 7 And singers as well as dancers, (swelling the anthem,)
'All my fountains are in thee.'

1 **His foundation.** Cf. Isa. xiv. 32. The opening seems abrupt (hence some suppose a lacuna in the text); but this may be designed for effect.—**Mountains**, as cxxxiii. 3, Jerusalem being situated in the centre of a mountainous region.

3 **Are spoken** (or, promised), viz. by the prophets, whose mantle the poet here assumes. See references above.

4-6 The adoption of the nations

'among the sons' (Jer. iii. 19), or (which is the same thing) their enrolment in the civic register of Zion (cf. lxix. 29).—**Rahab** (i.e. 'arrogance'; or, comparing Ass. *rahābu*, 'sea-monster') is a symbolic name for Egypt (lxxxix. 11, Isa. li. 9, xxx. 7); **Babylon** may mean either Chaldæa, or less naturally some one of the imperial nations which succeeded it (see Ezra v. 13, Neh. xiii. 6).—**My votaries.** Lit., such as

know me (i.e. have entered into covenant with me, xxxvi. 11).—**This one was born there.** Pusey comments, 'Not as a mass only, but individually . . . and since they were already Egyptians, &c., yet were born in Zion, what is this but that re-birth, at whose mystery Nicodemus marvelled?'¹ Ewald too takes 'this one' in Pusey's sense, but contrary to *v.* 6, which speaks of 'peoples.' It is in *v.* 6 that the claims of the individual are parenthetically recognised. 'Born there' is of course to be explained by the familiar Jewish saying that a proselyte is like a new-born child (*Jebamoth*, 62 *a*). Thus, in *v.* 4 the nations are regarded as unities; but in *v.* 5 we catch a whisper of New Testament individualism. There is neither Egypt nor Babylon nor even Israel in the Church Universal; consequently of each Egyptian and Babylonian can it be said that he was born into a new

life in Zion.—**Shall stablish her,** i.e. shall continue to protect her (xlvi. 9).—**Shall reckon.** For Jehovah's lovingkindness is not limited to the nations mentioned in *v.* 4.

7 A fragment, as it seems to me, of a description of a joyous procession (cf. lxviii. 26, cxviii. 27). 'Young men and maidens shall be there, aged men beside boys, singers too as well as dancers, (swelling the anthem,) All my fountains are in thee.' The object of the procession will at once be seen; it is to express the joy of the old and new 'children of Zion' (cxlix. 2). The choice of the anthem is most appropriate; see lxxxiv. 7, Isa. xii. 3 (cf. Ex. xv.) For the mention of 'dancing,' see xxx. 11, cxlix. 3, cl. 4, and cf. 2 Sam. vi. 16. (There is no occasion therefore for Schnurrer's emendations, 'And princes like the sand of the sea shall all those be that dwell in thee.')

PSALM LXXXVIII.

THE bitter cry of one who feels himself excluded from God's presence. It stands alone in the Psalter, for the other elegiac psalms are fringed with hope. Compare the complaints of Job.

- 2 Jehovah my God, I have cried for help by day,
and complained by night before thee;
- 3 O let my prayer come before thee,
incline thine ear unto my piercing cry;
- 4 For my soul is sated with troubles,
and my life has drawn near unto Hades.
- 5 I am counted with them that have gone down into the pit,
I am become as a man that has no strength.
- 6 I am a freedman among the dead,
like the slain that lie in the grave,
whom thou rememberest no more;
yea, they are severed from thy hand.
- 7 Thou hast laid me in the nether pit,
in dark places and in gulfs;
- 8 Thy wrath rests upon me,
and with all thy billows am I pressed down.

¹ *Prophecy of Jesus, &c., a Sermon* (Oxf. 1879), p. 36.

- 9 Thou hast removed my familiar friends far from me ;
 thou hast made me an abomination unto them ;
 I am shut in, so that I cannot come forth.
- 10 Mine eye pines away with affliction ;
 Jehovah, I have called daily upon thee,
 I have spread open my hands unto thee.
- 11 Wilt thou perform wonders for the dead,
 or shall the shades arise and praise thee ?
- 12 Shall thy lovingkindness be rehearsed in the grave,
 and thy faithfulness in Abaddon ?
- 13 Shall thy wonders be made known in darkness,
 and thy righteousness in the land of oblivion ?
- 14 But I—unto thee, Jehovah, do I cry,
 and at morn doth my prayer go to meet thee.
- 15 Why, Jehovah, castest thou off my soul,
 and hidest thy countenance from me ?
- 16 I am wretched and a dying man from (my) youth ;
 I bear thy terrors, my senses must fail :
- 17 Over me have passed thy fires of wrath,
 and thine alarms have extinguished me.
- 18 They have surrounded me, like water, all the day,
 they have hemmed me in together.
- 19 Thou hast put far from me lover and friend ;
 my familiar friends are darkness [and the grave] !

2 See crit. note. Targ. and Sept. give the key to the passage.

4-10 The psalmist, speaking in the name of the church-nation, bemoans his bitter affliction and traces it to God's anger. This is not the first time that he has spread his case before Jehovah. He will once more complain in the familiar style. Israel is all but dead—both inwardly and outwardly (see on xxx. 2).

5 **A man that has no strength;** as it were, the ghost of a man (comp. *v.* 11).

6 **A freedman among the dead.** The psalmist alludes to the grim eulogy of death in his favourite poem, 'Small and great are there [in Sheól], and the slave is free from his lord' (Job iii. 19). But he gives a new turn to the phrase. Unlike

Job, he regards such freedom as the reverse of a benefit. The slave in Sheól is free from human caprice and cruelty ; but the Israelites whom the psalmist represents groan in their isolation from sympathy both human and divine. God seems even more unfriendly than man ; 'familiar friends' have only left the psalmist because God has 'removed' them, and God Himself follows him with his enmity even in this earthly Sheól. In one sense He 'remembers him no more,' but in another He never ceases to remember him. The guiding hand lies inactive in the bosom ; the avenging hand is heavy upon the sufferer.—**Like the slain.** Like the slain in battle who lie shamefully in the grave one upon another (Isa. xiv. 19, Ezek. xxxii. 24,

25).—**Severed from thy hand.** Comp. xxxi. 23, Lam. iii. 54, Isa. liii. 8.

7 **In the nether pit.** Comp. on lxxxvi. 13, and see Lam. iii. 55 (which passage is the original?)—**In dark places.** So cxliii. 3, Lam. iii. 6. The land of darkness is the grave, Job x. 21, 22, Isa. xlv. 19. So the Babylonians call the underworld 'the land where one sees nothing.'—**In gulfs.** Does the psalmist change the figure (cf. Lam. iii. 54) by a natural transition to the subterranean waters encircling Sheól (see on xviii. 5)? Or, precisely as *l'hômôth* in lxxi. 20, is *m'çölôth* here used of the deep places of Sheól itself?

9 One of the many sad titles of the Babylonian Hades was 'house of solitude.'

11-13 The psalmist once more repeats his daily prayer. He has conceived the idea of resurrection, but no more presumes to cherish it than the speaker of Job xiv. 14. See above, on vi. 6.

11 **The shades,** εἶδωλα καμόντων (see on xiv. 9). Symmachus, Θεόμαχοι, i.e. the Giants (more inappropriately here than in Job xxvi. 5).

12 **Abaddon,** i.e. Destruction, used like Death as a synonym for Sheól (see Job xxvi. 6, xxviii. 22). One of the seven names for Gehinnom (*Erubin* 19 a); Milton well renders, 'in perdition.'

13 **In the land of oblivion.** I would gladly, but for the termination, have personified forgetfulness (with Gray). Sept., 'in the forgotten land.'

14 A faint gleam of hope visits the psalmist, though this is merely hinted by the antithesis.—**But I**—unlike the shades—can and do still cry unto Jehovah.

16 **From (my) youth.** So Israel in cxxix. 1; cf. also xcii. 11, cii. 12, Isa. xlvi. 4.—**My senses must fail.** Lit., 'let me become torpid, or, paralysed.' The idea is, that the will ceases to resist the pressure of calamity (see Isa. xxxiii. 19, and cf. Driver, *Hebrew Tenses*, § 52).

19 **Thou hast put far . . . darkness [and the grave].** See Job xvii. 14, xix. 13, and comp. the oppressive description of the Egyptian Amenti, 'The country of heavy sleep and of darkness. . . They wake not to see their brothers, they recognise no more father and mother,' &c. (Maspero), *Histoire ancienne*, chap. i. prem. éd. (See also on v. 7.) The completion of the phrase in line 2 is due to Ols-hausen. The text-reading is perhaps best explained by Hitzig, 'mine acquaintances are invisible.' But how unnatural! The Peshitto has, 'mine acquaintances thou hast withheld from me' (similarly Jerome).

PSALM LXXXIX.

EVERYWHERE Jehovah's kindness and faithfulness proclaim themselves; only the Davidic house looks in vain for the fulfilment of the promises. The psalmist, speaking in the assumed character of David's heir (see on v. 39), accumulates images descriptive of distress and abasement. The full-toned harmony of the commencement gives place at v. 39 to harsh, discordant notes. But the psalmist has not lost his faith; he does but act as Jehovah's 'remembrancer' (Isa. lxii. 7, A.V. marg.) See Nathan's promises in 2 Sam. vii., and cf. my note on Isa. lv. 3; see also on Pss. ii., cxxxii.

2 Jehovah's lovingkindness would I sing for ever ;
with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to many
generations.

- 3 For lovingkindness shall be built for ever,
in the heaven (itself) wilt thou stablish thy faithfulness.
- 4 Thou hast said, 'I have made a covenant with my chosen one,
I have sworn unto David my servant,
- 5 Thy seed will I stablish for ever.
and build up thy throne unto many generations.'
- 6 And the heavens shall celebrate thy wonders, Jehovah,
thy faithfulness also in the congregation of the holy ones.
- 7 For who in the sky can rank with Jehovah,
or compare with Jehovah among the sons of the gods ?
- 8 A God deeply to be revered in the council of the holy ones,
and to be feared above all that are round about him.
- 9 Jehovah, God of hosts,
who is strong, Jehovah, like thee ?
* * *
and thy faithfulness round about thee.
- 10 It is thou that rulest the insolence of the sea ;
when its billows roar, it is thou that stillest them :
- 11 Thou that didst crush proud Egypt as one that is slain,
with thy strong arm thou didst scatter thine enemies :
- 12 Thine are the heavens, thine also is the earth ;
the world and its fulness—*thou* didst found them.
- 13 The north and the south—*thou* didst create them,
Tabor and Hermon ring out their joy at thy name.
- 14 Thine is an arm with heroic might ;
strong is thy hand, high is thy right hand.
- 15 Righteousness and justice are the base of thy throne,
lovingkindness and truth go to meet thy presence.
- 16 Happy the people familiar with mirthful shouts,
that walk, O Jehovah, in the light of thy countenance !
- 17 In thy name do they exult all the day long,
and through thy righteousness are they exalted.
- 18 For thou art the glory of their strength,
and in thy favour thou exaltest our horn.
- 19 For to Jehovah belongs our shield,
yea, our king to the Holy One of Israel.
- 20 Then spakest thou in a vision unto thy loving one, and saidst,
'I have laid strength upon a hero,
I have exalted one chosen out of the people.

- 21 I have found David my servant,
with my holy oil have I anointed him ;
- 22 By whose side shall be my hand unmoveably,
mine arm also shall strengthen him.
- 23 No enemy shall steal upon him,
nor any son of injustice afflict him ;
- 24 But I will shatter his foes before him,
and smite them that hate him ;
- 25 And my faithfulness and lovingkindness shall be with him,
and through my name shall his horn be exalted ;
- 26 I will make his hand reach to the sea,
and his right hand to the rivers.
- 27 He shall call upon me, Thou art my father,
my God, and the rock of my salvation ;
- 28 I also will appoint him to be firstborn,
the most High to the kings of the earth.
- 29 I will keep for him for ever my lovingkindness,
and my covenant shall be unfailing towards him ;
- 30 And I will make his seed imperishable,
and his throne as the days of heaven.
- 31 If his children forsake my law,
and walk not in mine ordinances,
- 32 If they profane my statutes,
and keep not my commandments ;
- 33 I will visit their transgression with the rod,
and their iniquity with scourges :
- 34 But my lovingkindness I will not withdraw from him,
neither will I belie my faithfulness ;
- 35 My covenant I will not profane,
nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips ;
- 36 I have sworn once by my holiness,
Verily I will not be false to David ;
- 37 His seed shall endure for ever,
and his throne as the sun before me :
- 38 As the moon, it shall be stedfast for ever ;
(the witness in the sky is faithful).'
- 39 But thou—thou hast cast off and spurned,
and hast become furious against thine anointed.
- 40 Thou hast abhorred the covenant of thy servant,
thou hast profaned his crown to the ground.

- 41 Thou hast broken down all his fences,
thou hast made his citadels a ruin ;
- 42 All that pass by the way spoil him,
he is become a reproach to his neighbours.
- 43 Thou hast exalted the right hand of his foes,
thou hast made all his enemies to rejoice ;
- 44 Thou didst also turn back the edge of his sword,
and didst not cause him to stand in the battle.
- 45 Thou hast put an end to his lustre,
and hast hurled his throne to the ground ;
- 46 Thou hast shortened the days of his youth,
thou hast wrapped him with shame.
- 47 How long, Jehovah, wilt thou 'hide thyself for ever' ?
(how long) shall thy wrath burn like fire ?
- 48 Bethink thee how short my time is,
for what vanity thou hast created all the children of men !
- 49 Who is the man that shall live on and not see death,
or win escape for his soul from the hand of Hades ?
- 50 Lord, where are thy old lovingkindnesses
which thou swarest unto David in thy faithfulness ?
- 51 Bethink thee, O Lord, of the insulting of thy servant,
how I bear in my bosom the dishonouring of peoples ;
- 52 Wherewith thine enemies, Jehovah, have insulted,
wherewith they have insulted the footsteps of thine anointed.

(Subscription to Book III.)

- 53 Blessed be Jehovah for evermore !
Amen and Amen.

3 On the text, see crit. note. **Shall be built**, i.e. not built up with continual accessions of mercies (as Delitzsch), but built once for all when Jehovah pledged His word, like the throne of David (v. 5).

4, 5 This early reference to David injures the artistic effect. Is it an involuntary expression of intense feeling, or are the verses misplaced ?

6 If the psalmist himself arranged the text as we find it, this verse is best connected with vv. 2, 3. As to praiseful gratitude, the earth and the heavens, the psalmist

and the angels, are in accord. The angels are called **holy ones**, not as morally perfect (see Job iv. 18, xv. 15), but as in a certain sense divine beings (see on viii. 6). 'Holy' and 'divine' are interchangeable terms, because holiness means originally freedom from earthly infirmity; *K'dōshim* and *elōhim* are therefore synonymous. Of course, such terms are applicable to the angels only in a relative sense; otherwise Jehovah's unique divinity would be contradicted (see v. 7). *K'dōshim* ('holy ones') occurs again in Job v. 1, xv. 15, Deut. xxxiii. 2, 3, Zech. xiv. 5 ;

'council of Eloah' (or, Jehovah), Job xv. 8, Jer. xxiii. 18.

7 Comp. xcvi. 19, Ex. xv. 11. Rig Veda iv. 30, 1, 'There is none, Indra, higher than thou, or superior to thee, thou slayer of Vjitra; neither is there any one like thee' (Muir). 'Slayer of Vjitra' illustrates the language of *v.* 10, which has mythic affinities (see my note on Isa. li. 10).—**Sons of the gods.** See on xxix. 1.

9 As the text stands, this verse is a tristich, and the last stichos is obscure. The analogy of *v.* 6 suggests that a line has dropped out, such as 'therefore do they praise thy mighty acts' (or, 'thy lovingkindness').

10, 11 See on *v.* 7, and, for 'Rahab' (*ὑπερήφανος*, Sept.), on lxxxvii. 5.

13 **Tabor and Hermon.** The picture is not that of two mountains in close perspective proximity, as both Tristram and Porter have supposed.¹ We are to think of Tabor and Hermon separately, the one as representing the west, the other the east. This symbolic view is manifestly required by the parallel line. The poet writes as a southerner, not in the vicinity of Nain. Approaching Tabor from the south—say, from Endor—the mountain seems to 'swell up, like a vast dome,' and to justify both our poet and the prophet Jeremiah (xlv. 18). Thus I am far from denying the beauty of the psalmist's line, because I regard it as presenting two pictures instead of one. A true catholic sense of beauty dictated the choice of these finely contrasted separate images. For the personification, cf. lxx. 13 (note). It is noteworthy that these two mountains both claim to be the scene of the Transfiguration.

15 See on lxi. 8, lxxxv. 11.

16-19 An ideal picture of Israel's happiness; perhaps a quotation—comp. the case of Isa. ii. 2-4 (certainly not Isaiah's work). The Godward aspect of the people is described in *l.* 2 of *v.* 16; its

earthward aspect in the second half of *l.* 1. 'Happy those who look up to the divine light, and who are consequently **familiar with mirthful shouts.**' Hitzig, '... the trumpet sound' (see on xxvii. 6); see, however, xcv. 1, 2, Job xxxiii. 26 (A.V. weakly, 'with joy').

18 *6* **Our horn** (lxxv. 5). Israel then is the people.

19 Israel's **shield** (or, defender, xlvii. 10), or, in simpler style, his **king**, belongs to Jehovah, and is therefore sacrosanct, inviolable. Contrast *vv.* 38, 39.

20-38 The promises of 2 Sam. vii. are reproduced more in detail, and here and there with even heightened colours. A prosaic introduction supplies the place of the first distich. 'Vision' comes from 2 Sam. vii. 4, 17. 'Then' suggests that *v.* 20 once stood not far from *v.* 4. Otherwise we must render, 'There was a time when,' &c.—**Unto thy loving one.** Another reading, very strongly supported (see the versions), gives the plural, which Del. explains of Samuel and Nathan.—**I have laid strength;** comp. xxi. 6. The text has 'help,' unsuitably.—**One chosen.** Or, 'a youth' (Ewald, Hitz., Del.) But a reference to David's youth seems irrelevant.

23 **Steal upon him.** The construction is unusual, but the sense is secure (see lv. 16). The alternative rendering, 'oppress him as a creditor,' is unpoetical.

26 Comp. lxxii. 8. The 'rivers' will be the Euphrates and its canals (as cxxxvii. 1).

28 **My firstborn.** So of Israel (Ex. iv. 22), and of Ephraim (Jer. xxxi. 9).—**The most High,** &c. Israel too is called *elyōn*, Deut. xxvi. 19, xxviii. 1, but with a different preposition (comp. lxxxiii. 18). 'To the kings' means in reference to the kings. The king of Israel is, as it were, an image of Jehovah ('the Elohim of elohim,' cxxxvi. 2) and the other kings are reflexions of the inferior elohim (see on lxxxii.

¹ Comp. a fourth-century notice in Hieron. *Opp.* iv. 2, col. 552, ed. Bened.

6). Comp. the boast of the king of Babylon, 'I will make myself like the most High' (Isa. xiv. 14).

30 **As the days of heaven.** So Deut. xi. 21 (of the people of Israel).

34 **Withdraw from him.** The text has, 'break (and take) from him' (cf. on lxxxv. 5), which might be an allusion to *v.* 3, but for the fact that the passage is a quotation from Nathan's oracle (comp. 2 Sam. vii. 15 with 1 Chron. xvii. 13). Keble's version anticipates the emendation.

36 **Once**, i.e. once for all. Or, 'one thing.' See on lxii. 12.—**By my holiness**, i.e. inviolably (lx. 8).

38 By the **faithful witness** some understand the moon, others the rainbow, but who could witness (or, declare) that such great things were true but Jehovah? Del. compares Job xvi. 19, which is parallel in outward form, though 'my witness' there means he who attests the truth of my words—a more special sense of 'witness' than is required here. Isa. lv. 4, however, sufficiently justifies the sense of 'declaring,' not to quote passages in which the *verb* occurs in this sense. The words enclosed in a parenthesis are, I suppose, the appendix of the poet; they resemble the introduction to one of the letters to the Seven Churches, 'These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness' (Rev. iii. 14), with which comp. Jer. xlii. 5, 'Jehovah be a true and faithful witness against us.'

39 **Against thine anointed** (so again *v.* 52). I have no doubt that the Davidic king (or rather, the Davidic royalty) is meant (see next verse). It is true, however, that the following verses contain some expressions which excuse Hitzig's view that the 'anointed' means the Jewish people (see on lxxxiv. 10). Thus in *v.* 51 we have 'thy servants' (so text; but see crit. note); and in *v.* 46, the 'shortening of the days of his youth,' which is hardly an isolated biographical

reference, but is said of the people (see on lxxi. 6); while *vv.* 41, 42 are clearly based on lxxx. 13, and refer to the Jewish nation. The origin of this phenomenon is that the Davidic house has long been overthrown, and the fate of the nation has a more practical interest for the writer, whose description therefore partly fits the king, partly the people, now become the heir of the old Davidic promises. That inheritance the psalmist but imperfectly realised; the Deutero-Isaiah formulated it in clear terms (Isa. lv. 3).

46 **Thou hast shortened**, &c. To whose 'youth' does the psalmist refer? Hengstenberg replies, To the Davidic family, which (see *v.* 19) should have been eternally young; Olshausen, To the last Davidic king (see 2 Kings xxiv. 18). Neither answer is satisfactory (see on *vv.* 19, 39). The analogy of similar language in other psalms (e.g. lxxi. 6, 9, 18) suggests that Israel is personified. Indeed, we find the very same phrase used of Israel in cii. 24. Is it not clear that the psalmist, throughout this section, is thinking of Israel quite as much as of the Davidic royalty? The period of national independence seemed to one languishing in exile a time of youthful vigour which might have lasted indefinitely had it not been cut short.

47 Comp. lxxix. 5, and see on xliii. 2.

48-52 This section contains two interesting personal references. First, the psalmist speaks as a man; next, as an Israelite. In *v.* 48 he says in effect, 'Consider, O Lord, how short my time is; O spare me a little, before I depart hence' (see xxxix. 5, 14, to which the psalmist alludes); in *v.* 52, 'Consider how I live and move and have my being in Thy people, whose burden of reproach I, by experience and by sympathy, share.' A point of contact between them is suggested by lxxviii. 39, where mercy for the people is implored on the general ground of the shortness of life.

Strictly speaking, these references are not consistent with the primary theme of the psalm, but in them we seem to catch, however faintly, the true lyric note. They are separated in the received text by a verse which Bickell rejects as prosaic and unrhythmical, but which I do not venture to expunge, considering the unrhythmical introduction of *v.* 20. On *v.* 48 *a* and *v.* 51, see crit. note.

—**In my bosom**, in large measure therefore; cf. Luke vi. 38. A parallel phrase occurs in lxxix. 12.

The 'bosom' means the folds of the loose upper garment (cf. Isa. xl. 11).

—**They have insulted**, &c. The phrasing is peculiar and has led to singular interpretations (see Poole's *Synopsis*, and Rashi and Grätz *ad loc.*) But is not this the poet's meaning? 'Anointed' though he is in the sight of God, he is hunted from place to place—driven into corners and hiding-places, and as he moves (cf. xvii. 11, lvi. 7) his enemies 'call aloud after him' (Jer. xii. 6).

BOOK IV.

PSALM XC.

A MEDITATION on the lot of humanity and of Israel, distinguished by a rough but impressive energy. The two or three points of contact with Deut. xxxii. (see on *vv.* 2, 13, 15) should be noted. The psalmist was evidently an admirer of that fine prophetic poem. He also sympathises profoundly with II. Isaiah, especially with regard to the eternity and sole creatorship of Jehovah. He is presumably indebted to these works; but for all that, he was himself a religious genius and an artist (cf. Murray, *Origin and Growth of the Psalms*, p. 271). Observe (1) that he speaks in the name not merely of Israel as a visible community, but of the 'elders' who 'obtained a good report as to faith' in all ages (Heb. xi. 2). Israel as a nation may date back only to the Exodus, but as a succession of men of faith it is as old as the patriarchs. And (2) that awful reverence predominates at the beginning (hence 'Adonai,' *v.* 1), clinging love at the close of his strain (hence 'Jehovah,' *vv.* 13, 17).

- 1 Lord, we have found thee an asylum, age upon age.
- 2 Before the mountains were born,
or the earth and the world were brought forth,
yea, from æon to æon thou art God.
- 3 Thou turnest mortals back to dust,
and sayest, 'Return, ye sons of the earth-born.'
- 4 For a thousand years are in thine eyes
as yesterday when it was passing,
and a watch in the night.
- 5 Thou stormest upon them; they fall into sleep;
in the morning they are as grass which sprouts again;
- 6 In the morning it blossoms and sprouts again,
in the evening it is cut down and withers.
- 7 For we are consumed through thine anger,
and through thy wrath have we been confounded.
- 8 Thou hast set our iniquities before thee,
those that none can discern in the shining of thy countenance.
- 9 For our days vanish as a murmur,
in thy fury our years are consumed.
- 10 Our lifetime—therein are (but) threescore years and ten,
and if we are of full strength, then (but) fourscore;

- and their proud boasting is travail and vanity,
so quickly is it gone by, and we take our flight.
- 11 (But) who hath learned the strength of thine anger,
and, according to the fear of thee, thy fury?
- 12 O learn us to number our days,
and we shall take home wisdom to our heart.
- 13 Return, Jehovah, how long?
and relent over thy servants.
- 14 Fill us with thy lovingkindness in the morning,
and we will give ringing shouts of joy all our days :
- 15 Make us to rejoice according to the days thou hast afflicted us,
the years wherein we have seen adversity.
- 16 Let thy doing be shown unto thy servants,
and thy majesty unto their children ;
- 17 And let the pleasantness of Jehovah our God brood over us,
and the work of our hands O prosper thou over us,
yea, prosper thou our handiwork.

1 **An asylum.** The text has, 'a habitation,' through an easy corruption found again in lxxi. 3 (cf. xxxi. 3), xci. 9, Deut. xxxiii. 27. To this last passage (which *needs correction*) our poet is often supposed to allude. I would rather hold that the two writers lived upon the same high truths. To both Jehovah was the God who had revealed Himself long since—the 'God of antiquity' (Deut. xxxiii. 27), though the Deuteronomic poet seems not to have formed as wide a conception of 'Israel' as our psalmist, and not to lay the same stress on the eternity of God.

2 **Were born were brought forth** (on reading,¹ see crit. note). The phrase is a survival of primitive mythic conceptions (see *Encyclop. Britann.*, ed. 9, art. 'Cosmogony'). The 'earth' or 'world' (synonyms, as Prov. viii. 31, Job xxxvii. 12), as well as its ruling race, has its תולדות or 'birth-register' (Gen. ii. 4), and the mountains are its 'enduring foundations' (Mic. vi. 2). The 'everlasting mountains'

(Gen. xlix. 26, Hab. iii. 6) is a favourite poetic phrase. Another psalmist calls them 'the mountains of God' (see on xxxvi. 7), because they stand out from the rest of creation, Wisdom alone being more ancient (Prov. viii. 25).—**From æon to æon**, one æon (see xli. 14, note) extending indefinitely in the past, and the other in the future. Jehovah, then, is the 'Rock of ages (æons)' Isa. xxvi. 4; or, as *we* should say, the Timeless One (see on vv. 3, 4).—**Thou art God**—strictly, Thou wast and art God. 'God, Heb. *El*, the Strong One (comp. on cxviii. 27). Who but the Strong and the Eternal could have been, could still be our asylum, weak, unhappy, and short-lived as we are? Israel is the 'everlasting people' (Isa. xlv. 7, Ewald; comp. Mal. iii. 6), only because Jehovah is 'an everlasting God' (Isa. xl. 28).

3 This verse is a partial explanation of the phrases 'from age to age' (v. 1) and 'from æon to æon' (v. 2). What is time? A succession of

¹ If in v. 2 we adopt the pointing *wattekhölzî*, and render, 'And thou gavest birth to,' &c., we may compare Deut. xxxii. 18, 'thou forgattest El that gave thee birth.' This, however, is said of Israel, whereas the psalmist has risen above the limited nationalism of the poet of Deut. xxxii.

ever fresh lives. Destruction is the condition of renovation (comp. civ. 29, 30); this alternation of processes makes history. But God is above time and above history. The generations do not fill up the 'æons' of 'the Rock of ages.' *V.* 4 explains the unconditioned absoluteness of God's Being.—**Thou turnest mortals**, &c. Alluding to Gen. iii. 19, though the word for 'dust' is different.—**And sayest, Return.** To which of the generations is this call addressed—to the old or to the new? Does it mean, Return unto me, the Creator and the Judge of human spirits; or, Be reduced to lifeless matter; or, Appear once more in fresh individual forms on the stage of history? The first of these three views is satisfying to a devout mind at a first glance; but it is against the whole connexion of thought. The vision of the psalmist is limited to this life. He is not preoccupied by the thought of a future judgment. That saying of Mohammed (*Korán*, Sur. xxx. 10, Palmer), 'God produces a creation, then He makes it go back again, then unto Him shall ye return,' belongs to a later age of religious thought, and is not really parallel to our passage. Our choice lies between the second and the third view. To me, an antithesis makes the verse more effective, especially in a context which dwells on the succession of generations. Comp. civ. 30.

4 Time future seems long to us; time past, short. Standing on an imaginary bridge between the old day and the new, what a 'span long' seems the old day as it vanishes; what an ample space stretches before us in what we can hardly yet call 'to-day.' The second figure forms a climax. A watch in the night has no duration at all to the unconscious sleeper; so time is neither short nor long to the Absolute.

5 The introductory verses were grave but cheerful in tone. With *v.* 5 a perceptible change occurs. The thought of the absoluteness of

the Divine Being has its depressing as well as its encouraging side. For the race and for the nation, it is a comfort to recall to mind the divine eternity; but for the individuals of whom each successive generation is formed it is the reverse. The deluge which 'wiped off' every living creature (Gen. vii. 4) is continually being repeated.—**Thou stormest upon them**; lit., thou sendest a rain-storm upon them.—**They fall into sleep**, i.e. the sleep of death or of Sheól; comp. lxxvi. 6. Luther's explanation (in Hengstenberg) is tempting, 'Truly our life is nothing else than a sleep and a dream, for before we are rightly conscious of being alive, we cease to live;' but will it suit the Hebrew, which has, literally, 'they become a sleep'? Can this mean, 'they look back upon their ended life as upon a dream'? Though Riehm seems to think this possible, I doubt it.—**As grass, which sprouts again** (after it has been mown). Man is ever being renewed, like the grass, but also, like the grass, ever being cut down (ciii. 15, 16). Comp. *Korán*, Sur. x. 25, 'we make it (this world's life) as it were mown down.'

7-10 The psalmist, like the poet of Job, speaks primarily in the name of humanity, but has a secondary reference to the affliction of Israel. This may be true even of *v.* 10 (see on the parallel passage, xxxix. 6). The consciousness of sin and the implied view of death in *vv.* 7-9 are peculiarly Jewish.—**Those that none can discern.** Comp. on xix. 12, xxxii. 5.—**As a murmur.** Or, 'as a sigh;' or, 'as a thought;' but usage hardly favours 'thought.' A sound too can more easily be materialised (so a 'word' often). In correcting the text, for reasons partly æsthetic, partly rhythmical, I follow Bickell. The poetic expression 'vanisheth' requires a figure to give it precision, and the two members of the verse become good tetrameters through Bickell's changes (see crit. note).—**In thy fury.** 'Fury'

is never predicated of Jehovah in the prose writings of the O. T.; lyric and prophetic emotion expresses itself in this strong word. There is no O. T. passage which approaches so nearly to the statement that 'death is the wages of sin.' True, the close of the psalm suggests a different estimate of life and death (see on *vv.* 13-17).

10 Comp. *v.* 4.

Our noisy years seem moments in the being
Of the eternal Silence.—*Wordsworth.*

Their proud boasting, i.e. all those earthly possessions which conduce to ἀλαζονία (1 John ii. 16), and all that vehement self-assertion by which they are obtained. Comp. the antithesis in Isa. xxx. 7 (end).—**Travail and vanity.** The mood of Ecclesiastes (see on lxxiii. 16), and of Goethe at 75. 'Man hat mich immer als einen vom Glück besonders begünstigten gepriesen . . . Allein im Grunde ist es nichts als Müß' und Arbeit gewesen' (*Gespräche mit Eckermann*, 27 Jan. 1824).—**We take our flight**, like a dream (Job xx. 8, same verb).

11 **Who hath learned**, &c. 'Who has realised the intensity of God's displeasure against sin in the degree which the "fear of God" (i.e. true religion) requires?'

12 **O learn us**, &c. The text runs literally, 'To number our days—so (i.e. such knowledge) teach us and we shall bring (i.e. into our storehouse) a heart (i.e. mind) of wisdom.' (See crit. note.) Contrast this passage with Wisd. xv. 3. To the psalmist, the due recognition of God's awful power results in a wholesome sense of the transitoriness of life. To the wise man, 'to know thy power is the root of immortality.' What an interval between the two stages of belief!

13 17 A prayer for the restoration of the favour of Jehovah. Here the psalmist speaks entirely

in the name of Israel. The church-nation has appeared to be almost dead (see on xxx. 4), and life in consequence has been scarcely 'worth living.' But when the prayers of the psalmist shall have been heard, death will lose its sting. Having his share in that great national 'work' which corresponds to Jehovah's 'doing,' he will rejoice and be glad all his days. He will lose himself in the double thought of God's loving-kindness towards each of His servants and the assured continuance of his people, in whose case those words of Deut. xxxii. 39 have been verified, 'I kill and I make alive.'

13 The first half of this verse reminds us of vi. 4, 5; the latter, of Deut. xxxii. 36. Some compare also Ex. xxxii. 12.

14 **In the morning.** After the night of trouble (see on xxx. 6).

15 Observe that the forms יָמוּת, יָמוּת occur again in Deut. xxxii. 7, and there only.

16 **Thy doing**, i.e. Thy providential care renewed from generation to generation (so xcii. 5, Deut. xxxii. 4). More commonly the phrase denotes some special divine interposition (xliv. 2, lxxvii. 13, xc. 9).

17 **And let the pleasantness**, &c. 'May we be encompassed with sensible tokens of the divine favour' (see on xxvii. 4). Does Sept. mean more than this by its καὶ ἔστω ἡ λαμπρότης . . . ἐφ' ἡμᾶς?

—**The work of our hands.** No special enterprise is meant, but the manifold work of exhibiting righteousness in daily life. A common Deuteronomic phrase.—**Yea, prosper thou**, &c. Possibly this repetition is an error of the scribe, or, as Bickell supposes, the second verse-half should run, 'The loving-kindness of our God be upon us, and prosper thou,' &c. (transposing 'our God' from the first distich).

PSALM XCI.

THE most vivid of the liturgical psalms. The theme (the security of the believer) is developed dramatically by an antiphonal arrangement.

As soon as by speech and reply the idea has been thoroughly set forth, a third voice, speaking in the name of Jehovah, confirms and rewards the believer's loving trust. We may call this psalm, The oracle of the *believer's*, as opposed to that of the ungodly man's heart (xxxvi. 2). Comp. on Ps. cxxi.

[*First Voice.*]

- 1 [Happy] he that sits in the covert of the most High,
that abides in the shadow of the Almighty,
- 2 That says unto Jehovah, My refuge and my fortress,
my God, in whom I trust.

[*Second Voice.*]

- 3 For he shall rescue thee from the snare of the fowler,
from the destroying pestilence.
- 4 With his pinions shall he screen thee,
and under his wings shalt thou find refuge ;
shield and targe shall be his truth.

[*First Voice.*]

- 5 Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror of the night,
for the arrow that flies by day ;
- 6 For the pestilence that darkling roams,
for the deadly sting that wastes at noonday.
- 7 A thousand may fall beside thee,
and ten thousand at thy right hand ;
it shall not approach thee.
- 8 Only with thine eyes thou shalt look on,
and see the recompence of the wicked.

[*Second Voice.*]

- 9 Because [thou hast said,] ' Jehovah is my refuge,'
and hast made the most High thine asylum,
- 10 No evil shall be sent to meet thee,
no plague shall come nigh thy tent.
- 11 For he shall give his angels charge concerning thee
to keep thee in all thy ways.
- 12 Upon their hands shall they bear thee,
lest thou strike thy foot against a stone.
- 13 Thou shalt tread upon lion and adder,
upon young lion and dragon shalt thou trample.

[*Third Voice ; a Priest's ♯*]

- 14 Because he has clung to me with love, I will rescue him ;
I will set him secure, because he knows my name.
- 15 When he calls upon me, I will answer him ;
I will be with him in trouble ;
I will deliver him, and bring him to honour.

16 With length of days will I satisfy him,
and feast his eyes with my salvation.

1 As in the case of xxxvi. 2, the loss of a word has spoiled the meaning of the verse. The received text actually makes this warm, devotional lyric begin with a tautological maxim. After *vv.* 1, 2 have been corrected, the psalm becomes parallel to Ps. cxxviii. (already compared by Lowth), in so far as it begins with a beatitude, and then sets forth the particulars of the believer's happiness.—**The most High . . . the Almighty.** Two archaic names of God—Elyōn and Shaddai, which the Sept. translator regards as completely parallel and renders τοῦ ὑψίστου, τοῦ Θεοῦ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ. In his rendering of Shaddai (cf. lxvii. 14, where he gives τὸν ἐπουράνιον), he may seem to confirm an Assyriological explanation of this title as 'high' or 'high as a rock.' This, however, can be no more than a coincidence. He lived at a time when the transcendence of the Divine Being was overpoweringly felt. He must also have noticed that El Elyōn and El Shaddai occur in neighbouring sections of the life of Abraham (Gen. xiv. 22, xvii. 1), and may reasonably have conjectured that they had similar meanings. The phrase 'God of heaven' was also familiar to the later (Hebrew) writers (see on cxxvi. 26). The conventional interpretation 'the Almighty' (more strictly, 'the All-sufficient') may be based on a false etymology (from the relative ׀ and יָ), but at any rate suggests a perfectly true idea, viz. that Shaddai describes the Divinity in His more awful aspect (cf. especially Isa. xiii. 6, Joel i. 15, Ezek. i. 24, x. 5). In mediæval times Shaddai (in the sense of 'mighty'?) was an element of Jewish charm-formulæ.—**In the shadow, &c.** In Isa.

xxv. 4 Jehovah is called 'a shadow from the heat,' suggesting the image of a rock. Probably, however, the figure here is rather that of a bird (as *v.* 4; cf. xxxvi. 8). Comp. the proper name Bezaleel ('in the shadow of El'), Ex. xxxi. 2, xxxv. 30, Ezra x. 30.

2 **That says . . .** The Peshitto and Septuagint approach this view of the text. The former has, 'He that sitteth, &c., hath said,' &c.; the latter, 'He that dwelleth . . . shall abide . . . He shall say unto the Lord.' The vowel-points, however, give, 'I say,' &c.; one error brings another in its train (see on *v.* 1).

3-13 Who is addressed? Each disciple of the psalmist (cf. xxxvii. 1-9), or, virtually, each true believer; or, when sung, the higher self of him who sings the poem. The paradoxes remind us of Matt. xvii. 20. By a bold accumulation of extreme statements, the poet would stir us up to seek for their spiritual meaning.

3 **The snare, &c.** The figure aptly describes the unexpectedness of death; comp. xviii. 6, Eccles. ix. 12. In Isa. xxv. 7 (see note) it is rather the inevitableness of man's doom which is similarly described.

4 **With his pinions.** Like an eagle² (a reminiscence of Deut. xxxii. 11). There is no allusion to the winged disk, which in ancient Oriental mythologies symbolises the beneficent progress of the sun-god in the heavens, and which explains the mixed imagery of Mal. iv. 2 (cf. on Pss. xix. 5, cxxxix. 9).

5 **The terror of the night.** So Cant. iii. 8; comp. Isa. xv. 1, 'For in the night Ar-Moab was stormed, was destroyed.' But see below, on *v.* 6.—**The arrow, &c.** Comp. *II.* iv. 146, which, however, breathes

¹ Friedr. Delitzsch, *Prolegomena* (1886), p. 96; cf. *Prophecies of Isaiah*, ed. 3, ii. 148.

² Smend (*Theol. Stud. u. Krit.*, 1884, p. 720) prefers the figure of the hen (cf. Matt. xxiii. 37). But this is surely not grand enough for this context.

a tenderness unknown to the psalmist. It is somewhat less probable that 'shaft' = 'painful sickness;' cf. 'the arrows of the Almighty,' Job vi. 4.

6 The pestilence . . . the deadly sting. The first of these two forms of plague (Heb. *dēbher*) is personified, like the Babylonian *Plague-demon* Dibbara. For the other (Heb. *qēṭeb*), Sept.'s rendering of *qōṭeb* in Hos. xiii. 14 (κέντρον) suggested the only poetic substitute which I could find for the pale and hackneyed 'destruction.' The root-meaning is obviously 'to cut.' 'Sting' furnishes a good parallel to 'arrow' in *v.* 5 *b*; in Deut. xxxii. 24 the word has the epithet 'bitter,' i.e. poisonous. The Targum gives this singular rendering of line 2, 'from the crowd of *shēdim* (or, demons) which destroy at noonday' (cf. Targ. 2 Chron. xi. 15); the Sept., ἀπὸ συμπτώματος καὶ δαιμονίων μεσημβρινοῦ (cf. Keble). Did these translators derive the notion that the inferior spirits¹ were dangerous at noontide from foreigners? and may we at all follow them in our exegesis? Certainly Mal. iv. 2 alludes to the good influence of the sun upon sicknesses (see on *v.* 4). I do not know why the other half of the widespread belief respecting the sun may not have been shared by our psalmist, whatever be his date. If so, the 'terror by night,' equally with that of noonday, may be caused by the sun's supposed inability to ward off destructive influences. The scholar-poet Leopardi quotes the Sept. as above in illustration of similar beliefs in Greek and Latin literature (e.g. Theocritus, *Idyll.* i. 15, 16). See notes to his 7th canzone. — **That darkling roams.** Similar phrases are used of the Babylonian Plague-god and his messenger (*Bab. and Or. Record*, i. 12; cf. Sayce, *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 310, &c.)

8 Only with thine eyes, &c., i.e. thou shalt only see, without thyself sharing, the punishment of the wicked.

9 The correction in the text, simple as it seems, is the result of the combined thought of critics of different periods—from Theodoret to Hupfeld and Riehm. The psalmist must surely be alluding to *v.* 2. This is the second time that a word has probably dropped out of the text (see on *v.* 1). Some may prefer to divide the distich between two speakers, or to transpose in thought the verb and its object from the end to the beginning of the verse, rendering, 'Because thou hast made, &c., (saying,) Jehovah is my refuge.' But for the former course I know no parallel (see on Ps. cxxi.), and the latter, in spite of Isa. xli. 27 (see my note), seems to me too artificial. — **Thine asylum.** See on xc. 1.

11 His angels. Jewish doctors found an allusion to a man's 'two ministering angels.'² But the 'angelus custos' belongs to nations, not to individuals in the O.T. The poet delightedly refers the care of him to the 'angels' in general—not to the 'sons of Elohim'—a phrase with a mythic tinge which became ungenial to later writers. See on ciii. 20, civ. 4.

13 The adder and the dragon symbolise deadly malignity (Deut. xxxii. 33). Cf. Luke x. 19 (where, however, malignity takes a personal form).

14 By a sudden and effective transition, Jehovah becomes the speaker (cf. xlvi. 11, lxxv. 3). — **Clung to me with love.** So Jehovah 'clung to you with love' (Deut. vii. 7).

15, 16 Comp. l. 15, 23, xxiii. 6 *b* (a finer form of the promise). 'Salvation' is both an act and a state (as l. 23).

¹ See on cvi. 37. We must not, with Reinke in his discussion of these versions (*Beiträge*, viii. 194), intrude the notion of the evil spirit of Christendom.

² *Iaznith*, 11 a (Wünsche, *Der bab. Talmud*, i. 433).

PSALM XCII.

A HYMN to the faithful God who has dealt so wondrously with his righteous people. Thus the 'enemies' (*v.* 10) are not personal but national, and—need one add?—the 'works' of Jehovah (*v.* 5) are not those of creation (as the Hebrew title may suggest,¹ and as the learned Dante may have thought, *Purg.* xxviii. 80), but those of God's righteous government of the world (*cf.* cxliii. 5).

- 2 Good is it to give thanks unto Jehovah,
and to make melody unto thy name, O most High,
- 3 To publish thy lovingkindness in the morning,
and thy faithfulness in the night seasons,
- 4 With a ten-stringed instrument, yea, with the harp,
with sounding music upon the lyre.
- 5 For thou hast gladdened me, Jehovah, with thine operation ;
I will ring out my joy in the work of thy hands.
- 6 How great are thy works, Jehovah !
very deep are thy designs.
- 7 A brutish man discerns it not,
neither can a fool understand this.
- 8 When the ungodly did spring as the herbage,
and all the workers of naughtiness blossomed,
it was that they might be destroyed for ever ;
- 9 But thou, Jehovah, art in the high heaven for evermore.
- 10 For lo, thine enemies shall perish ;
all the workers of naughtiness shall be scattered abroad
- 11 And mine horn thou didst exalt as that of a wild ox,
my wasting strength with rich oil :
- 12 Mine eye also looked its full upon mine adversaries,
upon them that rose up against me, doers of evil.
- 13 The righteous shall spring up like a palm-tree,
he shall wax tall as a cedar in Lebanon.
- 14 Planted in the house of Jehovah,
they shall spring up in the courts of our God.
- 15 They shall still shoot forth in old age,
full of sap shall they be and flourishing,

¹ Comp. *Rosh hashânâh*, 31 a (Wünsche, i. 336). Grätz, however, explains the selection of psalms for the Levites to sing on the seven days of the week with reference to the circumstances of the Herodian period. He remarks that the seven psalms (xxiv., xlviii., lxxxii., xciv., lxxxv., xciii., xcii.) give an alternation of elevating and depressing themes. The psalms of rebuke occupy the middle of the week, those of a more encouraging tendency being allotted to the remaining days (*Monatsschrift*, 1878, pp. 217-222). That in later times Ps. xcii. was variously ascribed to Adam and to Moses is of course not against this view.

16 To declare that Jehovah is upright,
that in my Rock there is no unrighteousness.

2 **Most High.** Jehovah is not only Israel's God, but Lord of all nations (see on lxxxiii. 19). The psalmist strikes his keynote.

4 **With the harp** (see on xxxiii. 2). Josephus, who states that the *kirûpa* had ten strings (*Ant. vii. 12, 3*), is not a safe guide for early music.—**With**, i.e. to the accompaniment of.—**Sounding music**, i.e., probably, prolonged instrumental music (*higgâyôn*, as ix. 17, Mas. text).

6 **Thy designs**, i.e. God's plans for training His people (cf. xl. 6, Isa. lv. 8, 9).

7 **A brutish man.** A designed paradox in expression (cf. lxxxiii. 22). Man, unlike the brutes, has '*emû-nâh*, i.e. leans on the invisible God whose might is directed by righteousness.

8 The poet recognises a certain relative truth in the old retribution-doctrine. From time to time God does interpose to put down the wicked and exalt the righteous. To such events (especially to some recent one) the poet refers.

9 **In thy high heaven.** The Hebrew is very condensed—*mârôm* 'height.' The object of the recent attacks of the 'ungodly;' but the God of Israel is enthroned, not upon Mount Zion alone, but in the 'height of heaven' (see xviii. 17). So 'Jehovah is secure, for He dwelleth in the height,' Isa. xxxiii. 5; and such is the connexion of ideas in Ps. xciii. 3, 4; comp. xlvii. 9 (note).—**For evermore.** Heaven and eternity are related ideas (Isa. lvii. 15); earth and liability to decay (cii. 26).

10 The received text of 10a

contains a faulty repetition. **Shall perish**, however successful for a time, or frequently = are wont to perish. Then he reverts to the descriptive tone (comp. v. 8). See, however, for another view Driver, *Hebrew Tenses*, § 80, *Obs.*

11 The overthrow of the ungodly is contrasted with the renovated youth of the righteous. A single great national mercy may be intended; or possibly a series of experiences. The figurative language of v. 11a reminds us of

lxxxix. 18.—**My wasting strength** (see crit. note). Israel is imagined as an old man¹ (cf. lxxxviii. 16, vi. 3), whose strength is restored through the use of oil (cf. James v. 14). So in v. 15 righteous Israelites are said to 'shoot forth in old age.' The Zeugma need cause no difficulty. Most render the pointed text, 'I am anointed,' &c., but there is no parallel passage for this.

13-15 Trees are symbols both of long life (Isa. lxxv. 22) and fruitfulness (see on i. 3). The **palm-tree** and **cedar** are selected to contrast with the lowly herbage (v. 8). The Arabic poet Labîd (cf. on cxviii. 27) has a similar comparison of God's blessed ones to fruit-laden palm-trees. The psalmist, however, can only have seen clusters of ripe dates in the Jordan valley).—**In the house of Jehovah.** Cf. on lii. 10 (parallel passage).—**Flourishing.** Used of men (as here; cf. Dan. iv. 1), רָעַנְנָה may be rendered thus; used of foliage (as lii. 10 and perhaps xxxvii. 35), 'fresh, soft, sappy;' of oil, 'rich' (made from sappy olives).

PSALM XCIII.

NOTICE first of all the fine word-painting in vv. 3, 4 (cf. on xlii. 8), which has led some one to describe this psalm as *an echo of Niagara* (= 'thundering water'). But is it not rather a sea-piece? And next, the psalmist's

¹ בְּלֵתִי is the word used by Sarah of her 'waxing old,' Gen. xviii. 12.

love for the name Jehovah, and his view of the previous history of Israel as a *veiling* of God's strength and majesty. Only now, after a wondrous self-revelation, can He be said to have visibly assumed the royal dignity. Faith and hope make light of temporary drawbacks and are already a true 'theocracy.' These ideas, however, receive but a fragmentary expression. May we regard this psalm as a poet's preliminary trial of strength; or may we, as Grätz and Prof. Briggs suggest, regard this and some other psalms as broken off from one great hymn to King Jehovah (*Messianic Prophecy*, p. 449)? At any rate, we must study all the 'accession-psalms' together, viz. *xlvi.*, *xciii.*, *xcv.*-c.

- 1 Jehovah is become king, he has robed himself in majesty,
robed himself, yea, girt himself with strength;
stablished therefore is the world, tottering not.
- 2 Stablished is thy throne from of old;
thou art from everlasting.
- 3 The streams have lifted up, Jehovah,
the streams have lifted up their voice;
the streams lift up their din.
- 4 Than the voices of many waters,
swelling gloriously, breakers of ocean,
in high heaven Jehovah is more glorious. *Heb. Text?*
- 5 Thy testimonies are very faithful;
holiness is seemly for thy house
O Jehovah, unto length of days.

1 Jehovah is become king. The motto of several psalms (see *xcvi.* 10, *xcvii.* 1, *xcix.* 1, *xlvi.* 9, and comp. *Isa.* *xxiv.* 23, *lii.* 7). It indicates an expansion of the idea of Jehovah's sovereignty such as characterised especially the Babylonian period. Notice in this connexion the frequency of the name Malchijah in post-Exile times. It is singular that in II. Isaiah we still find such a phrase as this—'Jehovah . . . the Creator of Israel, your King' (*Isa.* *xliii.* 15).—**Stablished therefore, &c.** Comp. *xcvi.* 10. Jehovah's world, like His throne (*v.* 2), was long since founded securely, but the appearance of security was not complete. Once and again 'nations roared, kingdoms tottered' (*xlvi.* 7); yea, 'all the foundations of the earth were tottering' (*lxxxii.* 5). But now that Jehovah has made known

His glory, righteousness and goodness are seen to be deeper even than almighty power (comp. *xcvii.* 2 *b*).

3 Comp. *xlvi.* 4, *lxxxix.* 10. The angry nations are as ocean-waves ('streams' = ocean as in *xxiv.* 2) dashing against the throne of a king; but—'hitherto shalt thou come and no farther' (*Job xxxviii.* 11): cf. *xcii.* 8, 9. In the first line the poet (if the text be right) deserts simplicity of expression. 'Din' is, literally, 'collision,' i.e. the noise of wave dashing against wave (cf. *xcviii.* 8).

4 Why **voices** rather than 'voice' (*v.* 3)? To suggest a parallel with the 'voices thundrous' (Keats), which seemed to the early men to come from Jehovah (see *Ex.* *ix.* 23, &c.) The psalmist's full idea is, that when Jehovah thunders the din of the waters (i.e.

the tumultuous nations) is silenced.

—**Swelling gloriously.** Even Delitzsch scarcely resists the temptation to correct the text, so as to render line 2, 'than breakers of ocean more glorious.' But '*addirim*' is a learned poet's reminiscence of Ex. xv. 10. 'Glorious' with us expresses the capacity of exciting æsthetic pleasure in the beholder; hence Keble paraphrases '*addir*, 'glorious, beauteous without ending.' 'Might' is certainly implied, however, as well as magnificence (see on viii. 2, xvi. 3, cxxxvi. 18, and cf. 1 Sam. iv. 8, where '*addirim*' is an epithet of '*elōhim*).

5 From Jehovah the psalmist reverts to the two great pledges of His favour to Israel. The **testi-**

monies in which He has set forth His commands and promises (cf. the use of הַעֵיֶר in l. 7, lxxx. 9, Deut. viii. 19, and of תְּעוּדָה in Isa. viii. 16) deserve implicit credence (as xix. 7) and are superior to change (cf. Isa. vii. 9 Heb.) They are Irsael's 'solace' in persecution (cxix. 24); but the psalmist humbly 'reminds' Jehovah (Isa. lxii. 6 *b*) that His earthly 'house' (at once Jehovah's temple and, as Hos. viii. 1, Jer. xii. 7, His land) is equally guarded by divine sanctions, and is in idea at least sacrosanct, inviolable. (For this thoroughly authentic sense of 'holiness,' see 1 Sam. vi. 20, Isa. vi. 13.) He doubtless has in his mind the concluding petition of Ps. xxiii.

PSALM XCIV.

A CRY for vengeance on Israel's oppressors passing into an appeal for more faith to God's own people. At the close, the psalmist 'builds himself up' in his own comforting faith. Herder and Leibnitz have both noticed the importance of *vv.* 8-10 for the history of the philosophy of religion. In fact, the psalmist is in his own way a philosopher, like the author or authors of *Job*.

- 1 O God of vengeance, Jehovah,
O God of vengeance, shine forth :
- 2 Lift up thyself, O Judge of the earth,
render their deserts to the proud.
- 3 Jehovah, how long shall the ungodly,
how long shall the ungodly triumph ?
- 4 They belch out, they utter arrogant things,
they carry themselves proudly—all the workers of naughtiness.
- 5 They crush thy people, Jehovah,
and afflict thy heritage ;
- 6 The widow and the sojourner they slay,
and the orphans they murder ;
- 7 And they say, 'Jah will not see,
neither will the God of Jacob regard it.'
- 8 Give heed, ye brutish among the people,
and O ye fools, when will ye deal wisely ?
- 9 He that plants the ear, can he not hear ?
or he that forms the eye, can he not look ?

- 10 He that admonishes the nations, can he not punish?
he that teaches man knowledge?
- 11 Jehovah sees through the schemes of men,
for they are but a breath.
- 12 Happy the man whom thou admonishest, Jah,
and teachest out of thy law,
- 13 To give him rest from the days of adversity,
until the pit be digged for the ungodly!
- 14 For Jehovah will not abandon his people,
neither will he forsake his inheritance,
- 15 For judgment must turn again to righteousness,
and all the upright in heart follow it.
- 16 Who will rise up for me against the evil-doers?
who will set himself on my side against the workers of naughtiness?
- 17 Unless Jehovah had been my help,
my soul had soon dwelt in Silence.
- 18 If I say, 'My foot fails,'
thy lovingkindness, Jehovah, holds me up.
- 19 When my mazy thoughts crowd within me,
thy consolations delight my soul.
- 20 Can such be allied with thee—the tribunal of destruction,
which frames mischief according to law?
- 21 They attack the soul of the righteous,
and condemn the innocent blood.
- 22 Therefore Jehovah shall be unto me a sure retreat,
and my God the rock of my refuge.
- 23 He shall bring back upon them their own wickedness,
and exterminate them for their malice,
Jehovah our God shall exterminate them.

1 **O God of vengeance.** Similarly Jer. li. 56 (*g'mül = nāqām*; see Isa. xxxv. 4).—**Shine forth.** The language of theophanies (see l. 2).

4 **Carry themselves proudly.** Is there a reminiscence of this in Isa. lxi. 6 (see note)?

6 **The widow . . . they murder.** The case described is an extreme one (comp. 1 Sam. xxvii. 9), and implies the callous indifference of foreign tyrants. To put even a *gēr* (a guest or sojourner,

a μέτοικος) to death was against the Levitical legislation (Lev. xxiv. 21, 22). Comp. on v. 5.

7 **The God of Jacob.** The speakers only know of Jehovah as one among many tribal or national deities.

8, 9 From the foreign oppressors the psalmist turns to tried and tempted Israelites. They are called 'brutish' and 'fools,' as having forfeited, for a time at least, the highest privilege of men—viz. sympathy

with the ways of Him in whose image they were made (see lxxiii. 22, xcii. 7). To meet their difficulties, the writer appeals first to the argument from analogy. Far from despising anthropomorphism, he accepts and draws comfort from it. 'God (you admit) planned and made the curious mechanism of hearing and vision; is it possible that He is Himself without the faculties which He gave you? Must He not hear those cries and see those outrages which ye His creatures see and hear? Can He be an unobservant and apathetic God?' It is a less probable view that the tyrants themselves are referred to in *v.* 8, and that they are native Israelites. Does not 'in the people' seem added to distinguish the persons now addressed from the tyrants? It is going far afield to refer to Ezek. xxi. 36 (A.V. 31), where בערים = 'wild, or inhuman,' and to Isa. xl. 7, xlii. 5, where 'the people' = human people. (Notice 'thy people' in *v.* 5, and 'nations' in *v.* 10.)

10 This, as Dr. Binnie remarks (*The Psalms, Their History, &c.*, p. 221), is not a mere iteration of the inference in *v.* 9, but carries the argument forward. Or rather, a second argument is suggested—that of the divine education of the human race.

—**He that admonishes.** That God 'admonishes' Israel was long ago seen (see the Hebrew of Deut. iv. 36, viii. 5); but Israel's spirit-led thinkers are now taking a wider view. A true faith may underlie objectionable forms, and God may recognise this faith (see on¹ lxv. 2). Such a faith must of course be filled with a comparatively pure moral spirit, and these foreign tyrants show by their acts that this spirit is not theirs. But not only through the forms of worship but through the conscience¹ does God speak to man. He speaks therefore to these bad men.—He educates or at least disciplines them. The divine edu-

cation, in fact, implies rewards for the good, chastisements for the erring, and punishments for the bad. Comp. on *v.* 12.

11 Yes; there can be no doubt of the answer to these questions. God is not unobservant. He **sees through** all that these men are planning—because He, being the Creator, is infinite, whereas **they** (i.e. men) **are but a breath** (as xxxix. 6). If, then, He has the analogues of hearing and sight, he must have these faculties in infinite perfection.

12 (An allusion to Job v. 17, where however *mūsār* = 'chastisement'—God's *outward* admonition.) God's fatherly admonition is granted in fullest measure, not merely to Israel, but to the individual Israelite (see xvi. 7), who takes his share of the national chastisement, and who might well be disturbed by it, but for the deep inward rest which springs from the study of the Law (Tōra). This precious volume is, in fact, the ordinary channel of the divine admonition (cf. Ps. cxix.) The legal and the prophetic Tōra both inculcate the doctrine that sooner or later punishment will overtake the ungodly, who shall fall into the very 'pit' which he made for others.

14 **Will not abandon his people.** Jehovah's chastisement will not proceed so far as a second 'captivity.' Cf. Jer. xii. 7.

15 **For judgment, &c.** One of those pointed but obscure phrases in which Eastern poets delight. It might mean, 'for the judgment of God shall indeed be seen to be justice' (so Dr. Pusey). But taking the second line in connexion with *v.* 16 *b*, 'judgment' is rather the administration of justice committed to human magistrates. 'Judgment,' says the psalmist, 'now so much abused by those who are charged with it, must turn again and join itself to that principle of righteous-

¹ The idea of conscience loomed before the Biblical writers long before philosophical Greek supplied the word *συνείδησις*; and when St. Paul speaks of 'that which may be known of God' as being 'manifest in them' (Rom. i. 19), we need not suppose him to be dependent on other than Biblical teaching.

ness which by leavening judicial forms produces justice.' Kay personifies (comp. Isa. lix. 14), rendering, 'for Judgment shall return unto Right, and all honest-hearted men in its train.' Some verb, however, must be expressed in the rendering of the second line; the sense required is 'shall rally round it.' Luther well, 'dem Recht müssen alle frommen Herzen zufallen.'

16, 17 To understand these two couplets, read *v.* 18. The psalmist recalls the unbelieving fears by which he has been assaulted, and the 'way to escape' which opened itself in the thought of God's loving-kindness. He quotes words which he uttered or thought when under temptation. 'Oh that I had some champion or ally.' Then he remembers how he answered himself. 'Have I not had proofs enough already (my people Israel, that is) that, when all men forsake me, yet Jehovah is on my side (comp. cxxiv. 1-3)? Indeed, but for this, there would have been only a step between me and death.' Observe that in dealing with his own (that is, with suffering Israel's) temptations, the psalmist deserts his former line of argument (*vv.* 8-10). He calls memory to his aid, and reminds himself, not perhaps (as lxxvii.) of ancient mercies, but of recent interpositions, less brilliant but not less divine. To be still among the living is for him wondrous enough, and is the earnest of mercies to come.—**Silence**, i.e. the silent land, Sheól (as cxv. 17).

19 **My mazy thoughts.** The subtlety of the human mind impressed Sophocles; it is a kindred reflexion which forced itself on the Hebrew poets. Our own Keats speaks of 'branchèd thoughts' (*Ode to Psyche*). The wanderings of thought, even in a good man, are dangerous (cxxxix. 23 *same word*); they may even issue in hateful irreligion (cxix. 113). Hence our psalmist's failure to 'compose and quiet his soul' (cxxxii. 2).—**Delight**. Or, 'solace' (cxix. 16, 47, 70). The root-meaning is 'demulcere.'

20 A specimen of these 'mazy thoughts,' expressed as usual (*vv.* 9, 10, 16, lxxvii. 7-9) in the interrogative form. It seemed at first as if all the injustice (*vv.* 5-7) were not merely permitted, but sanctioned by God. Language even contributed to this delusion, for 'Elohim' was sometimes employed as a synonym for the judgment-seat (Ex. xxi. 6). The question, however, has already been answered, and the psalmist virtually confesses that he too was brute-like and foolish (*v.* 8).—**According to law**, i.e. with the forms of justice (Isa. x. 1).

22, 23 The psalmist concludes in the tone of prophetic certitude. He announces the final issue of this sin and wickedness as if he were looking back upon past events. 'So Jehovah was unto me . . . He brought back upon them . . . he exterminated them.—**For**; or, in (comp. v. 11), as De Witt.

PSALM XCV.

Ps. xciv. as it stands is formed of fragments of two psalms. There is an exact parallel in Ps. lxxxi., which begins with a summons to festal joy and is lengthened out by an oracle referring to Israel's desert wanderings.

- 1 Come, let our cries ring unto Jehovah,
let us shout unto the rock of our salvation.
- 2 Let us come before his face with thanksgiving,
let us shout unto him with chantings.
- 3 For Jehovah is a great God,
and a great King above all gods :

greatest

our saving

- 4 In whose hand are the recesses of the earth,
and the summits of the mountains are his ;
5 Whose is the sea, and he made it, *because*
and his hands formed the dry land.
6 Come, let us worship and bow down,
let us kneel before Jehovah our maker :
7 For he is our God, and we—
the people of his hand and the flock of his shepherding.

* * * * *

(Fragment of another Psalm.)

* * * * * to-day !

oh that ye would hear his voice !

- 8 'Harden not your heart, as at Meribah,
as in the day of Massah in the wilderness,

- 9 *or when* Where your fathers tried me,
proved me, *after having seen* but also saw my work.
10 For forty years I had a loathing at this generation,
and said, They are a people that go astray in their heart,
and ignorant are they of my ways ;
11 So that I swear in mine anger,
Surely they shall not enter into my rest.'

1-7 *a* 'Rejoice and be thankful, because this great God, Jehovah, is our God.'

3 **Above all gods.** A sarcastic reference to popular phraseology (see on xcvi. 4, xcvii. 7).

4 *b* Theodoret sees a polemic reference to the heathen temples on hill-tops.

6 **Our maker.** In a special sense (as c. 3, cxlix. 2, Isa. xliii. 21, xliv. 2, &c., Deut. xxxii. 6, 15).

7 **The people of his hand, &c.** Transposing 'hand' and 'shepherding' (comp. lxxix. 13, c. 3).

7 *b* Here another psalmist implores Israel not to shut his ears to the warning voice. Comp. lxxxi. 9 *b*.

9 **My work,** i.e. my work of judgment (Ewald, Hitzig, Hupfeld).

10 **That go astray, &c.,** i.e. without understanding (Isa. xxix. 24). Comp. Assyr. *tē'ā* 'madness.'

PSALM XCVI.

THIS psalm is the complement of Ps. xcvi. ; in *v.* 10 it strikes the keynote of Ps. xcvi. Its special feature is the dramatic appeal to the converted nations (cf. Ps. lxxvii.) With insignificant omissions, it forms part of the mosaic psalm of thanksgiving ascribed to David or to Asaph in I Chr. xvi. 23-33. Reminiscences of II. Isaiah abound.

- 1 Sing unto Jehovah a new song,
sing unto Jehovah, all the earth.
2 Sing unto Jehovah, bless his name ;
tell the news of his salvation from day to day.
3 Rehearse his glory among the nations,
his wonders among all peoples.

- 4 For great is Jehovah, and highly to be praised ;
terrible is he above all gods ;
- 5 For all the gods of the nations are but vain gods,
but it is Jehovah that made the heavens :
- 6 Glory and grandeur are before him,
strength and splendour in his sanctuary.
- 7 Ascribe unto Jehovah, ye families of the peoples,
ascribe unto Jehovah glory and strength :
- 8 Ascribe unto Jehovah the glory of his name,
take offerings, and come into his courts.
- 9 Worship Jehovah in hallowed pomp,
be in pangs before him, all the earth.
- 10 Utter it among the nations, 'Jehovah has become king ;'
stablished therefore is the world, tottering not ;
he will give doom to the peoples in equity.
- 11 Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth exult,
let the sea thunder and the fulness thereof ;
- 12 Let the plain triumph and all that is in it,
moreover, let all the trees of the forest give a ringing cry
- 13 Before Jehovah, for he has come,
for he has come, to judge the earth ;
he will judge the world in righteousness,
and the peoples in his faithfulness.

1 **A new song.** So xcvi. 1, xxxiii. 3 (note), xl. 4, Isa. xlii. 10.

4 Comp. cxlv. 3, xcvi. 3, xcvi. 9. The foundation-passages are xlvi. 2, and perhaps xlvii. 3, but in 4 *b* 'gods' (*elōhīm*) takes the place of 'the earth' in xlvii. 3. Observe that the psalmist for a moment accepts popular language, which admitted the real existence of the gods of the heathen (comp. on xcvi. 7). In the very next verse, however, he declares that the *elōhīm* are but *elīlīm*. This is a mocking echo of *elīm* ; the word, which was possibly coined by Isaiah (see on Isa. ii. 18), expresses the vanity of the pretensions of these so-called divinities (Sept. *δαμόνια* ; cf. cv. 37, Deut. xxxii. 17, Isa. lxxv. 11, Baruch iv. 7,

from a late theological point of view). It is clear therefore that the writer's monotheism is absolute ; he would not have thoroughly sympathised with Pss. xxix., lviii., lxxxii. We may draw the same inference from the refrain of these psalms ; Jehovah's kingship is of the Eastern and not of the Western type. The 'glory of his name' is that it is unique (comp. Zech. xiv. 9 ; Isa. xlii. 8).

7-9 Taken with slight variations from xxix. 1, 2 ; only the celestial courtiers are here exchanged for 'the παρρηαὶ of the nations' (comp. xxii. 28).

10-13 An appeal for the sympathy of nature which reminds us of many lyrical passages in II. Isaiah (e.g. xlii. 10-12, lv. 12, but especially xliv. 23).¹

¹ The bold addition ' (hath reigned) from the tree,' which dates back to Justin Martyr, and is found in the Latin psalters (but not in the Gallican), is doubtless from a Christian hand. Fortunatus employs it splendidly in the hymn *Vexilla Regis*, chanted on the Friday of Holy Week (comp. Dante, *Inf.* xxxiv. 1).

12 Moreover. The text has 'then' (so also 1 Chr. xvi. 33). This destroys the idealistic tone of the picture. The visible sovereignty of Jehovah is a present fact to the faith of the psalmist. It is with him 'now,' not 'then.' Jehovah has either taken the kingdom, or is coming to judge the earth' (comp. xcvi. 9). This joyous mood belongs to an *early* part of the post-Exile period.

13 He has come. Or, 'he cometh,' which, however, is opposed to the context and to Isa. xlv. 23.

—**He will judge.** The accession is a single act; the judging is a continual process. Note that 'judging' has no terrible sound to a Hebrew: 'with righteousness shall he judge (=right) the weak,' Isa. xi. 4.

PSALM XCVII.

THE same subject as before. *Vv.* 1-6 describe Jehovah's 'accession,' with the imagery proper to a theophany (comp. xciv. 1). *Vv.* 7-9 give the impressions which this great event must produce upon the Israelites and upon the idolaters respectively, and the psalm closes with a practical application in *vv.* 10-12. Reminiscences of the earlier literature abound. The psalm, like many others (notably cxxxv.), is one of those 'costly mosaic-works' which 'in our careless reading of Scripture we so often overlook' (Trench on Rev. iii. 1-6).

- 1 Jehovah has become King ; let the earth exult,
let many far-off lands rejoice ;
- 2 Clouds and darkness are round about him,
righteousness and justice are the base of his throne :
- 3 Fire goes before him,
and licks up his foes round about.
- 4 His flashes lighten the world ;
the earth sees it, and is in agony :
- 5 The mountains melt like wax before Jehovah,
before the Lord of the whole earth :
- 6 The heavens declare his righteousness,
and all the peoples have seen his glory.
- 8 Zion hears it and rejoices,
and the daughters of Judah exult,
because of thy judgments, Jehovah.
- 7 Shamed are all they that serve graven images,
that make their boast of vain gods ;
worship him, all ye gods !
- 9 For thou, Jehovah, art most High above all the earth,
greatly exalted above all gods.
- 10 O friends of Jehovah, hate the evil thing ;
he preserves the souls of his duteous loving ones,
from the hand of the ungodly he delivers them.
- 11 Light arises for the righteous,
and joy for the upright in heart :

12 Rejoice, ye righteous, in Jehovah,
and give thanks to his holy memorial.

7, 8 = 0. 11 = men
of the

1 **Far-off lands.** Probably an allusion to Isa. xlii. 2; for other allusions see on xcvi. 1, 10-13.

2-5 Comp. the theophanies in Pss. xviii., l., lxxvii.

3 *b* For the expression, comp. Isa. xlii. 25.

4-6 Here the tenses change. Some would therefore render, 'gave shine,' 'saw it,' 'was in pangs,' and similarly in vv. 5, 6, 8, supposing that there is a reference here to a past event, such as the fall of Babylon or some Maccabæan victory. But are not the perfects derived from earlier psalm-passages descriptive of a theophany in which this 'tense' occurs?

5, 6 For the expressions in v. 5, comp. Mic. i. 4, Zech. iv. 14, vi. 5; for those in v. 6, l. 6, cviii. 3, Isa. xxxv. 2, xl. 5, lii. 10, lxvi. 18, &c.

8, 7 The transposition explains what it was that 'Zion heard' and brings the summons to the false gods into connexion with the emphatic claim on behalf of Jehovah in v. 9 (so Hupfeld). Comp. v. 8 with xlvi. 12, v. 7 (lines 1 and 2) with Isa. xlii. 17, xlv. 9.—**Worship him,** &c. For 'elōhīm ('ye gods'), Sept. has οἱ ἄγγελοι αὐτοῦ (comp. viii. 5, cxxxviii. 1, Sept.), whence Milton finely, at the close of a speech of the Almighty (*Par. Lost*, iii. 341), 'But all ye Gods—adore him,' &c. But this does not omit the connexion. Must we, then, suppose an involuntary relapse into a popular mode of thought, which recognised Bel and Nebo as divinities? But the writer has just before spoken of such objects of worship as *elilim* (see on xcvi. 4). Surely it is a poetic instinct, which, overriding a regard for literal accuracy, impels him to introduce a supernatural scene akin to that in Ps. lxxvii. In that psalm, however,

there is no clear evidence that the writer himself did not believe in the protective *elōhīm* of whom he speaks, whereas here it is simply for dramatic effect and with a strong dash of sarcasm (cf. cxxxviii. 1), that the poet summons the vanquished deities to prostrate themselves before *Elyōn* (v. 9)—the Most High God. He endows them with divinity in order more effectually to undefy them.

9 Comp. xlvii. 3, 10, lxxxiii. 19, xc. 3.

10 **Hate the evil thing.** Comp. Prov. viii. 13, 'The fear of Jehovah is to hate evil,' and the saying of Ptah-hotep (the illustrative value of which does not depend on the identity of the Hebrew and the Egyptian sage's conception of God), 'To obey, means loving God; not to obey, hating God' (Brugsch, *Mythologie der Ägypter*, p. 91). The exhortation was not superfluous in an age when there were many 'double-minded ones' (cxix. 113). Another psalmist has already made the same demands upon 'Jehovah's loving ones' (l. 6). Throughout the long post-Exile period, but especially in the Maccabæan age, religious leaders felt that the only solid ground for their religious exclusivism was a moral one.—**He preserves.** The command and the promise are intimately connected; *khēsed* 'duteous love' is the opposite of the 'evil thing,' and the moral bond of Israel's covenant. Cf. xxxvii. 28.

11 **Light arises.** Correcting in accordance with versions and cxii. 4. Text has, 'Light is sown,' i.e. in the sunlit air (too original for this psalm).

12 A composition of xxxii. 11 *a* (omitting 'and exalt') and xxx. 5 *b*.

PSALM XCVIII.

AGAIN a specimen of poetical mosaic-work. There are several coincidences with Ps. xcvi. (vv. 1, 6, 11, 13); others with II. Isaiah (see Isa. xlv. 23, xlix. 13, lii. 9, 10, lv. 12, lix. 16, lxiii. 5).

- 1 Sing ye unto Jehovah a new song,
for marvellous things has he done ;
his own right hand has helped him,
and his holy arm.
- 2 His saving help Jehovah has made known ;
before the eyes of the nations
has he unveiled his righteousness.
- 3 His kindness and faithfulness has he remembered
unto the house of Israel ;
all the ends of the world have seen
the saving help of our God.
- 4 Shout merrily unto Jehovah, all ye upon earth,
break into a ringing cry, and make melody :
- 5 Make melody unto Jehovah with the lyre,
with the lyre and the sound of melody :
- 6 With trumpets and sound of cornet,
shout before the King Jehovah.
- 7 Let the sea thunder and the fulness thereof,
the world and they that dwell therein :
- 8 Let the streams clap their hands,
let the mountains together give a ringing cry
- 9 Before Jehovah, for he has come to judge the earth ;
he will judge the world with righteousness,
and the peoples in equity.

PSALM XCIX.

AGAIN the psalmist luxuriates in the thought of Jehovah's enthronisation (*vv.* 1, 2) and in the prospect of the universal anthem to His name. Jehovah is the Holy One, i.e. in this connexion the Infinite One ; and from this large conception the psalmist singles out the special feature of the divine righteousness for fuller treatment. The refrains, which make up a Trisagion, divide the psalm into three unequal parts.

- 1 Jehovah has become king—the peoples must tremble,
enthroned on the cherubim the earth must quiver.
- 2 Jehovah is great in Zion,
and high is he over all the peoples.
- 3 Let them give thanks unto thy name so great and terrible ;
he is the Holy One.
- 4 And the strength of a king that loves justice
thou thyself hast established in equity ;
justice and righteousness thou thyself hast wrought in Jacob.
- 5 Exalt ye Jehovah our God,
and worship at his footstool ;
he is the Holy One.

- 6 Moses and Aaron among his priests,
and Samuel among those that called upon his name—
called upon Jehovah and he answered them.
- 7 In a pillar of cloud he spake unto them,—
they had observed his testimonies and the statute he had given
them.
- 8 Thou answeredst them, Jehovah our God,
a pardoning God wast thou unto them,
but one that took vengeance for their misdeeds.
- 9 Exalt ye Jehovah our God,
and worship at his holy mountain,
for Jehovah our God is the Holy One.

1 **Enthroned**, &c. A standing religious phrase (see on lxxx. 2, xxii. 4). The participle is circumstantial; it fills out the picture of Jehovah's reigning.

3 **Sogreat and terrible**. Comp. lxxviii. 36, Ex. xv. 11, and see on cxi. 9.—**He is the Holy One**. Or, 'He is Holy' (a proper name, as it were; comp. xxii. 4). Jehovah is thus described; see *vv.* 5, 9.

6-8 Instances of the justice of the divine rule. Jehovah's faithful priests and Israel's intercessors received answers to their prayers. These prayers were not for themselves but for their people; hence the psalmist continues, with reference to the righteous in Israel whom alone, strictly speaking, they represented, by recalling the just reward given to his obedient ser-

vants by their self-revealing God. Whatever else this reward might be, it embraced the forgiveness of sins. On the other hand, an equally manifest example of God's justice was furnished by His vengeance on the transgressors in Israel; the 'name of Jehovah' included these two epithets: 'forgiving iniquity' and 'that will by no means clear the guilty' (Ex. xxxiv. 7). Moses and Samuel were both, according to tradition, great in intercessory prayer (for Moses see on cvi. 23; for Samuel, 1 Sam. vii. 9). But the psalmist lived in a time when the sacerdotal order was universally honoured, and he could not but make the most of the sacerdotal acts ascribed to Moses in Ex. xxiv., xl. 22-27, Lev. viii.

PSALM C.

A NATIONAL psalm of thanksgiving, with which an universalistic element is not completely fused.

- 1 Shout merrily unto Jehovah, all ye upon earth :
2 Serve Jehovah with gladness,
come before him with ringing cries.
3 Be sure that Jehovah is God ;
he made us, and his are we,
even his people and the sheep of his pasture.
4 Enter his gates with thanksgiving,
and his courts with praise ;
give thanks unto him, bless his name.

- 5 For gracious is Jehovah, his kindness is everlasting,
and from generation to generation his faithfulness.

3 Based perhaps on xcv. 6, 7 (see notes). **His are we.** So the Hebrew margin; the text-reading, which does not differ in pronunciation, is 'not we ourselves.' The antithesis 'he, not we' is possible, but taking this line in connexion with the next, and with the parallel passage xcv. 7*a*, there can be no doubt that the antithetic reading is to be rejected. See crit. note.

PSALM CI.

A DESCRIPTION of the ideal character of an Israelitish ruler, dramatically put into such a ruler's mouth. Both tone of thought and cast of expression betray the influence of the Book of Proverbs, which in some form must already have been esteemed as a moral standard. Nor is the speaker merely concerned about the purity of his public life; he is equally anxious about his private and indeed his inner life. The motto on 'the Regent Mar's building' at Stirling—

The moir I stand on oppin hith
My favltis moir svbject are to sitht—

would not have been uncongenial to the author of *vv.* 2-4 only; the spectator of whom he was in awe was not human, but Divine. The rhythm agrees with that of xix. 8-15. The psalm reminds one strongly in spirit and contents of the 'last words' dramatically put into the mouth of David in 2 Sam. xxiii. 1-7.

- 1 Of lovingkindness and justice would I sing,|unto thee, Jehovah,
would I make melody.
- 2 I would take heed to the way of perfectness ;|(when wilt thou
come unto me ?)
- I will walk in the perfectness of my heart|within my house.
- 3 I will not set before mine eyes|any villainous thing ;
deeds that swerve do I hate—|such shall not cleave unto me.
- 4 A perverse heart shall depart from me ;|evil I will not know.
- 5 Whoso secretly slanders his neighbour,|him will I exterminate :
him that has high looks and a swollen heart|I cannot endure.
- 6 Mine eyes are upon the faithful of the land,|that they may dwell
with me ;
whoso walks in the way of perfectness,|he shall minister unto me ;
- 7 None shall dwell within my house|that practises guile ;
he that tells lies shall have no station|where I may see.
- 8 Each morn will I exterminate|all the ungodly of the land,
that I may cut off from the city of Jehovah|all that work
naughtiness.

1 In spite of the isolation into which this view seems to bring *v.* 1, it must be insisted upon that **lovingkindness and justice** are meant primarily as divine attributes. Whenever the intention of 'singing' or 'making melody' is mentioned by a psalmist, it is always in

honour of Jehovah (comp. ix. 12, xiii. 7, xviii. 50, xxx. 5, 13, xxxiii. 2, lxviii. 5, and especially lxxxix. 2). That this is the case here, seems to have been the opinion of those who placed our psalm where it now stands. 'Lovingkindness and justice' are, according to them, the qualities most distinctive of Israel's King; and that they felt in harmony with the psalmists, is shown by passages like lxxxix. 15. One point of connexion, however, between *v.* 1 and the sequel remains. The speaker doubtless regarded his office as 'Messianic,' and being Jehovah's deputy, felt bound to make the divine rule the pattern of his own. 'Lovingkindness and truth' may have a similar secondary application in lxxxv. 11 (see note).

2 **When wilt thou come unto me?** seems a strange complement of the opening words, but is not on that account an interpolation. Jehovah's 'coming' can only be that divine interposition for which all good Israelites longed in the later age, and the abruptness of the clause reminds us of 'whence will my help come' in cxxi. 1. It was a fundamental idea in the Messianic doctrine that a righteous people must be prepared for Jehovah, and the only question was wherein did this righteousness consist—in forms (comp. Isa. lviii.) or in willing obedience. All agreed in 'desiring the approach of God' (Isa. lviii. 2), but there were only too many who stood in urgent need of that exhortation of another psalmist's, 'O friends of Jehovah, hate the evil thing' (xcvii. 10; see note), and of that assurance of the prophet, 'Thou meetest him that rejoiceth and worketh righteousness' (Isa. lxiv. 5). If the psalm be Davidic, we may compare 2 Sam. vi. 9, where David, alarmed at the fate of Uzzah, exclaims, 'How shall the ark of Jehovah come to me?' and conjecturally refer our psalm to a somewhat later time, when the king was thinking of transferring the ark to the 'city of David' (2 Sam. vi. 12),

and so making Jerusalem the 'city of Jehovah' (*v.* 8). But this proleptic use of the latter phrase is doubtful, and the ethical tone of the psalm is not Davidic. I would sooner compare Mal. iii. 1, 'The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple.' 'Suddenly;' then why not now? The 'highways in the heart' (to apply lxxxiv. 6) are ready; why should not the wished-for Advent take place? This view of course presupposes the existence of a Church within the nation consisting of the 'pure in heart' who are God's true Israel (lxxxiii. 1).

3 **I will not set,** &c., viz. as an object either of imitation or of attainment.—**Deeds that swerve.** More literally, 'the doing of acts that swerve' (viz. from the standard of uprightness). Or, as Kimchi and Ewald, 'the practice of them that swerve' (comp. xl. 5, and especially Hos. v. 2, Heb.).

4 Taking *v.* 4*a* with *v.* 2*a*, compare Prov. xi. 20, but notice the difference. There it is 'the perverse in heart;' here, 'a perverse heart,' which may perhaps mean perversity (or, insincerity) in the speaker's own heart.—**Evil.** Or, 'an evil person.'—**Know,** i.e. favour (i. 6).

5 **Him that has high looks,** &c. Comp. xviii. 28, cxxxi. 1, Prov. xxi. 4.

7 **Within my house.** So the ideal 'blameless' man in the poem provides against transgressions in his household (Job i. 5), and so a much later psalmist makes the righteous man 'visit his house continually to take away unrighteousness' (*Psalter of Sol.*, iii. 8; comp. 7).—**He that tells lies.** See on xv. 2. An Egyptian high officer said on his monument (long before the psalmist), 'I have spoken the truth—God's friend—every day' (Maspero, *Histoire*, chap. i., from Lepsius).

8 **Each morn,** i.e. continually; comp. lxxxiii. 14, Isa. xxxiii. 2.—**From the city of Jehovah.** The king acts in the spirit of xv. 1.

PSALM CII.

‘PRAYER for the afflicted when he faints, and pours out his complaint before Jehovah.’ A fine heading and unique in its kind, which could not be ignored. The ‘afflictions’ are those which come to the individual in so far as he is a true Israelite. In singing, the psalmist forgets himself, and becomes identified, like a Moses or a Jeremiah, with his people. He often alludes to kindred elegiac psalms (e.g. xxii., lxix.) and to the great Exile-prophecy (cf. my note on Isa. xli. 4). The transitions are grand.

- 2 Jehovah, hear my prayer,
and let my cry come unto thee.
- 3 Hide not thy face from me in the day of my straits,
incline thine ear unto me ;
in the day that I call answer me speedily.
- 4 For my days have vanished like smoke,
and my bones are burned through like a hearth.
- 5 My heart is smitten like the herbage, and dried up ;
in truth, I have forgotten to eat my bread.
- 6 For the sound of my sighing my bones
cleave [to my skin and] to my flesh.
- 7 I am like a pelican of the wilderness,
I am become as an owl of the ruins :
- 8 I am sleepless and must moan aloud
like a solitary bird upon the roof :
- 9 Mine enemies insult me all the day long,
they that are frantic against me curse by my name.
- 10 Surely I have eaten ashes like bread,
and mingled my drink with tears,
- 11 Because of thy fervent ire and indignation,
for thou hast lifted me up and cast me away.
- 12 My days are like a stretched-out shadow,
yea, as for me, I am becoming dry as the herbage.
- 13 But thou, Jehovah,—thou art seated for ever,
and thy memorial name is from age to age ;
- 14 Thou wilt arise and have compassion upon Zion,
for it is time to have pity on her, for the set time is come :
- 15 For thy servants take pleasure in her stones,
and it pities them to see her in the dust.
- 16 The nations also shall fear Jehovah’s name,
and all the kings of the earth thy glory,
- 17 Because Jehovah has built up Zion,
and has shown himself in his glory,

- 18 He has turned toward the prayer of the destitute,
and not despised their prayer.
- 19 Recorded shall this be for the next generation,
and the people to be created shall praise Jah,
- 20 Because he has looked down from his holy height,
out of heaven has Jehovah gazed upon the earth,
- 21 To hear the groaning of the captive,
to loose the sons of death,
- 22 That they may rehearse the name of Jehovah in Zion,
and his praise in Jerusalem,
- 23 When the peoples are gathered together,
the kingdoms also to serve Jehovah.
- 24 He has brought down my strength in the way,
he has shortened my days :
- 25 I will say, My God, take me not away
in the midst of my days,
thou whose years endure throughout all ages.
- 26 Of old thou didst lay the foundations of the earth,
and the heavens are the work of thy hands.
- 27 They shall perish, but thou shalt continue,
and they all shall wax old as a garment :
as a robe shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed,
- 28 But thou art (still) He,
and thy years shall have no end.
- 29 The children of thy servants shall abide,
and their seed shall be established before thee.

5 The psalm began with the familiar expressions of the older religious poetry (comp., e.g., xvii. 7, xxvii. 9, lxix. 18) ; at this point it becomes more original. The strongest figures are selected for describing the sufferings of pious Israelites.—**Smitten**, as it were, by the withering heat, as Hos. ix. 16 ; comp. cxxi. 6.

6 *b* The words in square brackets are supplied from Job xix. 20, sense and rhythm require this. The speaker's body is reduced to skin, bones, and a little flesh. Comp. Lam. iv. 8 (where, more naturally, 'flesh' is omitted).

7 The rendering **pelican**¹ is disputed, but on insufficient grounds. The lake of Huleh, where the

'sombre and austere' pelican abounds, is at any rate a solitary place, and it is as lovers of solitude that the two birds are introduced here.

9 **Curse by my name**, i.e. curse any other enemy of theirs by wishing them a fate like mine (Jer. xxix. 22, Isa. lxxv. 15). The speaker is surely Israel (comp. lxix. 12, xliv. 15).

10 The mourner's paradox—ashes his bread, tears his drink (comp. xlii. 4, lxxx. 6). He means the same as 'I have forgotten to eat my bread' (v. 5) ; both verses are introduced by the asseverative or explanatory particle כִּי.

11 *b* **Lifted me up and cast me away**. Comp. Job xxvii. 21,

¹ Cf. Mr. Houghton's letter, *Academy*, Apr. 5, 1884.

xxx. 22. The speaker is again Israel. But it does not follow that this is a figure for the Babylonian exile. Misery to the child of happiness is like captivity in a foreign land. See on *v.* 21.

12 **My days**, &c. The same figure occurs in *cix.* 23. Israel is now in the decline of life (comp. on xxxix. 6, xc. 10). See *v.* 24.

13-15 Here is the psalmist's comfort. He and his fellows are, humanly speaking, 'sons of death' (*v.* 21); but Jehovah's purpose, like Himself, is eternal. The 'set time' (comp. lxxv. 3, Hab. ii. 3) must have come. Can God have less pity for His people, than Israel has for the very stones of Zion? See on *vv.* 25-29.

13 **Thy memorial name**. In the parallel passage (Lam. v. 19), from which the psalmist doubtless borrows, the reading is 'thy throne.' The alteration may be intentional. If God's 'memorial name' (see Ex. iii. 15) is everlasting, so also must those be to whom alone it has been revealed, and who can therefore alone 'commemorate' it to the ignorant world. The new reading, therefore, involves a subtle argument.

15 **For . . .** Prayerful longing 'hastens the coming of the day of God' (2 Pet. iii. 11). Comp. a touching passage from a Hebrew poem of Spanish origin, translated by Sachs (*Die religiöse Poesie der Juden in Spanien*, p. 105)—

Wann wird des Heiles Stunde kommen?
—O deine Hoffnung hat dich nicht betrogen;
O harre nur, sie kommt herangezogen.

Thus much as to the thought of *v.* 15. For its imagery, cf. Neh. iii. 34, and remember the sad scene at the 'Wailing-place' in Jerusalem.

16-18 A fresh argument. The sight of such an interposition will so impress the nations without as to bring them to Jehovah (cf. Isa. lix. 19).—**The destitute** (or, the solitary). In Jer. xvii. 6 ערער means the dwarf juniper (or the like); and the double sense of the

word may be played upon here. When Jehovah 'turns towards' Israel, it is like transplanting a tree from the desert to the water-side.

19 The conception of a newly-created Israel belongs to II. Isaiah (see Isa. xliiii. 7, 21). Comp. also xxii. 32, where the new Israel, as here, receives the tradition of God's wonders from the Israel of the transition. There, however, the tradition is oral; here it is 'written down.' 'Dante' well paraphrases—

Un popolo miglior che quel di prima
Sarà creato, e questo degnamente
Lauderà Dio.

The conception of a 'new creation' was taken up and deepened both by St. Paul (e.g. 2 Cor. v. 17) and by the Jewish doctors in accordance with li. 12 (see Weber, *Altsynagog. Pal. Theologie*, p. 382).

21 Imitated from lxxix. 11 (see note).

24, 25 **The way** is the 'journey of life' (of the national life), perhaps with an allusion to the journey through the wilderness (Ex. xviii. 8).—**Take me not away**, &c. Clearly it is the nation which speaks. The decay of Israel's powers (see *v.* 12) is premature, and the nation feels the same horror as Hezekiah at being cut off like the wicked man (lv. 24) in the midst of its days.—**Whose years endure**, &c. As in *v.* 13, the eternity of God is the guarantee of a continuance for Israel to which the psalmists can see no limit. Comp. Isa. xlv. 7, at least as Ewald renders it, 'since I appointed the everlasting people.'

26-28 Notice the parallels in II. Isaiah (xlviii. 13, comp. xlv. 24; li. 6, comp. l. 9).—**Shalt thou change them**. Delitzsch sees an allusion to the hope of the new heavens and the new earth (Isa. xxxiv. 4, li. 16, lxxv. 17, lxxvi. 22).—**Thou art (still) He**—'the nameless He whose nod is Nature's birth' (Young). As Krüger explains, 'C'est Jhvh qui seul possède la réalité objective, qu'exprime d'une façon si caractéristique le

pronom de la troisième personne' (*Essai sur la théologie d'Esaié XL.-LXVI.*, p. 16). But does not the context suggest the kindred idea of unchangeableness? See my note

on Isa. xli. 4, and Dr. Westcott's on 1 John i. 7 (Jer. v. 12 should scarcely have been quoted; see above, on xiv. 1).

PSALM CIII.

THE first part of a great hymn to Providence (see Ps. civ.) with glances at the history of Israel. One of Jehuda Hallevi's most beautiful poems, composed for the Day of Atonement, is based on *vv.* 20-22 (*Sachs, Rel. Poesie der Juden in Spanien*, pp. 84-91).

- 1 My soul, bless Jehovah,
and all that is within me (bless) his holy name.
- 2 My soul, bless Jehovah,
and forget not all his benefits ;
- 3 Who forgives all thine iniquities,
and heals all thy sicknesses ;
- 4 Who releases thy life from the pit,
and crowns thee with kindness and tender mercies :
- 5 Who satisfies thy desire with good things,
so that thy youth is renewed as the eagle's.
- 6 Righteous acts doth Jehovah perform,
and judgments for all that are oppressed.
- 7 He made known his ways unto Moses,
his exploits unto the children of Israel. *concerning (?)*
- 8 Jehovah is full of compassion and pity,
long-suffering, and plenteous in lovingkindness :
- 9 He will not contend perpetually,
nor keep his anger for ever.
- 10 He has not dealt with us after our sins,
nor requited us according to our iniquities.
- 11 For as the heaven is high above the earth,
so mighty is his kindness over them that fear him ;
- 12 As far as sunrise from sunset
he has removed our transgressions from us.
- 13 As a father has compassion upon his sons, *nucleus of N.T.*
Jehovah has compassion upon them that fear him.
- 14 For he—he knows our frame,
and bethinks him that we are but dust.
- 15 Mortal man, his days are as grass,
as a flower of the field, so he blossoms ;
- 16 For a wind passes over it, and it is gone
and its place knows it no more.

- 17 But the kindness of Jehovah is from æon to æon brooding over them that fear him,
and his righteousness is unto children's children,
18 To such as keep his covenant,
and remember his behests to do them. *by doing them*
19 Jehovah has established his throne in heaven,
and his dominion rules over all.
20 Bless Jehovah, ye angels of his,
heroic in power, that perform his word :
21 Bless Jehovah, all ye his hosts,
ye ministers of his, that perform his will :
22 Bless Jehovah, all his works,
in all places of his dominion.
My soul, bless Jehovah !

1 **My soul.** The substratum of man (his personality) is put for the man himself. So in cv. 18, Joseph's 'soul' is described as put in fetters. — **His holy name.** Note the connexion: God's 'holy name' is proved by His forgiving love. No other being can so forgive; therefore God's name is 'holy' (Baudissin, *Studien zur semit. Religionsgesch.*, ii. 109).

3-5 The speaker addresses himself, not, as in *vv.* 1, 2, his 'soul'; it is only a Western reader who is conscious of any difficulty.

5 **Thy desire.** So Sept., τὴν ἐπιθυμίαν σου. The sense is good; but how to arrive at it? The Heb. properly means 'ornamentum tuum' (so Jerome). Is this a later poet's variation upon 'thy glory'¹ = 'thy soul' (see, e.g., xvi. 9)? So Hengstenberg after Ibn Ezra. 'To satisfy the soul' is a common phrase; see lxiii. 5, cvii. 9, Isa. lviii. 11. This is certainly more probable than that 'thine ornament' should mean 'thy body' (Pesh.) Once, in a late book, the body is no doubt called the 'sheath' of the 'soul' (Dan. vii. 15), but nowhere its 'ornament.' To substitute 'dress' (*Anzug*) for 'ornament' would be against usage. Köster seeks to improve upon Pesh.

by explaining 'thy reinvigorated body.' But the reinvigoration is described in a dependent clause which we have no right to anticipate. — **As the eagle's.** See on Isa. xl. 31.

8-13 A characteristic passage for the later stage of Israel's religion (cf. on lxxxvi. 5, 15). Verse 9 is based on Isa. lvii. 16, Jer. iii. 5, 12 (note *yiftôr*).

11 **As the heaven.** Comp. xxxvi. 6.

14 **That we are but dust.** Comp. lxxviii. 39, lxxxix. 48.

15, 16 Comp. xc. 5, Isa. xl. 6-8.

17 **Over them that fear him,** i.e. over true Israelites. The phrase has a wider sense than in cxxxv. 20. The verse implies the perpetuity of Jehovah's covenant with Israel (as cxl. 9), and bases it on Jehovah's eternity (see on cii. 24, 25).

18 For this limitation of Jehovah's kindness, comp. Ex. xx. 6.

19 **His dominion rules.** The kingship of Jehovah in the Old Testament shows itself in dominion; in the New Testament, in a capacity of blessing.

20, 21 **Heroic** (comp. xlv. 3), Heb. *gibbōrīm*, here used of the angels (as Joel iv. 11); also of Jehovah in xxiv. 8, lxxviii. 65. —

¹ It is true that the phrase 'thy glory' is not supported by usage; but we have here a later poet's artificial treatment of ancient themes.

All ye his hosts. See on cxlviii.
2. However we may explain that passage (where, observe, it is said 'host') the 'hosts' probably includes not only the angels, but the

forces of nature (see on civ. 4), and the stars, so closely related in the Hebrew mind to the angelic beings, and so frequently called 'the host of heaven.'

PSALM CIV.

THE preceding psalm had no adequate conclusion; its four closing verses strike the keynote for Ps. civ., which is the sequel of the great hymn to Providence. In the former, the author speaks in the name of Israel; in the latter, in that of the world. As George Herbert says—

Man is the world's high priest : he doth present
The sacrifice for all? himself!

Note the psalmist's view of nature as a revelation of the Creator (more strictly, of the 'faithful Creator,' 1 Pet. iv. 19). He does not indeed give as many specimens of his observations as the poet or poets of the Song of Songs; his object is simply to illustrate religious truths. But he has a frank enjoyment of nature (cf. v. 31), which is not subdued by any conflicting sentiment. There is no trace of the Pauline conception of the 'suffering creation,' which Edward Irving so finely blends with ideas borrowed from the psalmist, calling upon us to 'lead upwards to heaven's gate the doleful song of our common suffering,' and showing how 'everything that hath a being, can we, yea, ought we and will we, when thus schooled, call upon to praise and bless the Redeemer' (*Miscellanies*, p. 28).

A German critic denies the Hebrew writers a sense of natural beauty, and points to the disappearance of the mountains of Canaan in Ezekiel's ideal theocracy. Yet Ezekiel himself in the plains of Mesopotamia is fond of referring to the mountains of Israel (Ezek. vi. 2, 3, and often), and our psalmist at any rate appreciates the highlands of Lebanon. May we conjecture that he had been there? As Dean Stanley has pointed out, all the natural features of this psalm are within view from the cedar-grove (*Sermons in the East*, p. 217).

Observe throughout this psalm (with which comp. Ps. viii.) the free poetic use of the cosmogony in Gen. i., and cf. parts of the 5th of the Psalms of Solomon.

- 1 My soul, bless Jehovah !
O Jehovah my God, thou art very great,
thou hast robed thyself in glory and grandeur.
- 2 He wraps himself in light as in a mantle,
he stretches out the heavens like a tent-curtain ;
- 3 He lays the beams of his upper chambers in the waters,
he makes the clouds his chariot,
he travels upon the wings of the wind ;
- 4 He makes his messengers of winds,
his ministers of fire and flame.
- 5 He founded the earth upon its bases,
that it might be unshaken for ever and ever :

- 6 With the flood as with a robe thou coveredst it,
waters stood above the mountains.
- 7 At thy rebuke they fled,
at the voice of thy thunder they were scared away—
- 8 The mountains rose, the valleys sank—
unto the place which thou hadst founded for them.
- 9 Thou didst appoint a bound, that they might not pass over,
nor (turn) again to cover the earth.
- 10 He sends forth springs into the valleys,
between the mountains do they make their course :
- 11 They give drink to every beast of the plain,
the wild asses quench their thirst :
- 16 The trees of Jehovah have their fill,
the cedars of Lebanon which he planted,
- 17 Wherein the birds make their nests ;
the stork—her house is in the fir-trees :
- 12 Upon them dwell the birds of the heaven,
from among the branches do they sing.
- 13 To the mountains he gives drink from his upper chambers,
the earth hath its fill by the fruit of thy works.
- 14 He causes grass to spring up for the cattle,
herbs also for the service of men ;
- 15 To bring forth bread-corn from the earth,
and that wine may gladden weak man's heart ;
to make his face shine with oil,
and that bread may sustain weak man's heart.
- 18 The high mountains are for the wild goats,
the crags a refuge for the marmots.
- 19 The moon he made to measure times ;
the sun knows his going down.
- 20 Wilt thou have darkness? straightway it is night,
wherein all the beasts of the forest do move :
- 21 The young lions roar after their prey,
and seek their food from God :
- 22 When the sun arises, they withdraw themselves,
and lay them down in their dens.
- 23 Man goes forth to his work
and to his labour until the evening.
- 24 How manifold are thy works, Jehovah !
in wisdom hast thou made them all ;
the earth is full of thy creatures.
- 25 Yonder sea, so great, and stretching on either hand—

*upon the creature
the earth hath its
fill by the fruit of
of vv. 13-15*

*Heb. Text
in 11:13*

- therein are things moving innumerable,
 living creatures both small and great ;
- 26 There do the ships make their course,
 (there is) Leviathan whom thou didst form to sport with him.
- 27 All wait upon thee,
 that their food may be given them in due season.
- 28 Thou givest to them—they gather ;
 thou openest thy hand—they are filled with good.
- 29 Thou hidest thy face—they are confounded ;
 thou withdrawest their breath—they gasp,
 and turn again to their dust.
- 30 Thou sendest forth thy breath—they are created, *psps. resurrected*
 and thou renewest the face of the earth.
- 31 Let the glory of Jehovah endure for ever !
 let Jehovah rejoice in his works !
- 32 (The God) who looks upon the earth, and it trembles ;
 if he touch the mountains, they smoke.
- 33 I would sing to Jehovah while I live,
 make melody to my God, while I am.
- 34 Sweet be my musing unto him ;
 as for me, I will rejoice in Jehovah.
- 35 Let the sinners be consumed out of the earth,
 and the ungodly, let them vanish away.
 My soul, bless Jehovah !

2 In light. It is the essential, supernal light which is meant, which, according to Gen. i. 3 and the primitive cosmogonies, existed even before the sun. As 'robed' in this light, God is called 'the father of lights' (James i. 17). On later speculations, cf. Martensen, *Jacob Boehme*, p. 156 (E.T.)—**Like a tent-curtain.** For the divine dwelling or (as Isa. xl. 22) for man's?

3 His upper chambers. With Mohammed a synonym for Paradise.—**In the waters,** i.e. in the ocean which phrases of mythic origin represented as existing above the firmament (Gen. i. 7, Ps. xxix. 3, cxlviii. 4, Am. ix. 6). The name of the Babylonian Heaven-god, Anu, is equivalent to the upper waters (Haupt in Schrader's *K.A.T.*, p. 77 ; cf. Sayce, *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 190).—**The clouds,** &c. Unlike those imaginary deities which ride on

winged animals, Jehovah is borne along by the clouds and the wings of the wind.

4 Instead of human or even semi-divine messengers Jehovah (according to this illuminated thinker) uses the winds and the lightning (comp. cxlviii. 8). So in Sirach (xxxix. 28–31), fire and hail and famine and death are (comp. Philo, i. 431) 'spirits' created for vengeance. The poet would scarcely have denied that there were other, and those personal, messengers of God ; we must with Herder (*Werke*, Suphan, xi. 259), distinguish the Elohim (or 'sons of the Elohim ;' see on xxix. 1) from the angels (at any rate, from the angels of the later psalmists). The latter are simply the personified forces of nature (as here), or of grace (as xliii. 3) ; compare Stanley's fine application of this passage (*American Addresses*, p. 130). This un-

mythical view of the angels was in turn mythicised, e.g. by Philo in his theory of the *δυνάμεις* (comp. Jowett, *Epistles of St. Paul*, i. 386) and by the Talmudic masters, who taught 'that each order of things has its angel,' which means, not merely (as Mordecai, in *Daniel Deronda*, chap. xl.) 'the full message of each from what is afar,' but that each is not self-impelled, but moved and guided by agents of the divine will—something very like Plutarch's view.¹ We must not, however, transfer this view to Biblical theology, though advocated by that great prose-poet Card. Newman,² who says that natural objects and phenomena are simply indications or veils, 'the skirts of the garments, the waving of the robes,' of angelic ministrants. More acceptable is the explanation of Dean Perowne—'He clothes His messengers with the might, the swiftness, the all-pervading subtilty of wind and fire,' but, as it seems to me, this is not favoured by the purely poetical language of *v. 3 b*, &c. On the rendering see Driver, *Hebrew Tenses*, § 195, *Obs.*, and comp. Perowne, *Expositor*, Dec. 1878, p. 461.

5-9 The first part of the third day's work (Gen. i. 9, 10). In one respect the poet is clearer than the cosmogonist. He describes the earth as already formed with mountains and valleys, invisible, because covered with the primitive 'flood' (*ḥōm*, as Gen. i. 2), but only waiting for the divine sculptor to raise the veil and manifest them in their grandeur. How different from the Chaos of the Greeks—a confused mass of earth and water!

8 **The mountains rose**, i.e. emerged from the subsiding ('fleeing') waters. 'Colles exire videntur,' *Ov.*, *Met.* i. 344.

9 Comp. Prov. viii. 29, Job xxviii. 8. Dr. E. A. Abbott refers to this passage for the psalmist's unscientific fear of nature (*Through Nature to Christ*, p. 113). But

surely it expresses strong confidence rather than fear; the sea itself is law-abiding. It is a modern man of science who speaks of the ocean as a 'blue foaming dragon.'

10, 11, 16, 17, 12 The vegetable life produced on the third day presupposed the kindly gift of springs and rivers, and of rain. The former beautify the valleys (rather, wādys); see the description of Canaan in Deut. viii. 7, and contrast Egypt and Babylonia, each with its single great river.—**The trees of Jehovah.** Sept. 'the trees of the plain,' i.e. fruit-trees, comp. Deut. xx. 19 (*πέδιον* = *עֵדֶה*); but this violates the parallelism. 'Jehovah's trees' are especially those which to the Israelite rank among the noblest works of creation—the cedars. For the phrase, comp. on xxxvi. 7.—**Which he planted.** Comp. Num. xxiv. 6 (end).—**The stork.** Presumably the blackbird, which loves to make its 'house' (Cant. i. 17) on trees. The stork (*khasidāh*, the 'pious' bird) naturally attracted a psalmist (comp. Job xxxix. 13, R.V.)—**Upon them**, i.e. upon the trees. The collocation of verses adopted is favoured by Num. xxiv. 6, and greatly improves the connexion. Notice how averse the writer is to map out creation with pedantic accuracy. He cannot describe the third day's work (Gen. i.) without introducing a part of the animal life produced on the fifth day.—**Do they sing.** Observe that no singing-bird is mentioned by name, not even the Palestine nightingale (*bulbul*).

13-15, 18 But does the Creator forget the mountains? No. 'Look up towards the higher hills, where the waves of everlasting green roll silently into their long inlets among the shadows of the pines.' Not 'for the service of man' (Ruskin), but for those free, non-human beings—the wild goats and conies. Man receives gifts better adapted to his wants—gifts, not of the mountains, but of the valleys. But

¹ Weber, *Altsynag. Pal. Theologie*, p. 167; cf. Plutarch, *De Cessat. Oraculorum*, c. 13.

² Quoted by Perowne.

no gift of food comes without 'drink' from 'God's watercourse' (lxv. 10). Thus, all that live form one great family, and God, as Herder says, is the 'Hausvater,' who is continually working and giving directions for 'his earth' (Prov. viii. 31), that it may 'have its fill' with the 'fruit' or varied produce of the heaven-sent bounty. There is a striking parallel to this and the previous strophe in the praises of the Egyptian sun-god (Amen-Ra) translated by Goodwin, *Records of the Past*, ii. 132-3 :—

maker of grass for the cattle,
fruitful trees for men ;
causing the fish to live in the river ;
the birds to fill the air

* * * *

providing food for the rats in their holes ;
feeding the flying things in every tree.

14, 15 Comp. Gen. i. 11, 12. **Herbs** include all vegetable foods (cf. Gen. iii. 18, Ex. x. 12-15), which, as in Gen. i. 29, are regarded as the natural and (prior to the institution of animal sacrifice) exclusive food of the human race. Corn, wine, and oil, the three great products of the soil of Palestine (Deut. xii. 17). Comp. *v.* 15 *b* and *d* with the phraseology in Judg. ix. 13, xix. 5 (Heb.)—**Bread-corn** (Heb. *lêkhem*), as Isa. xxviii. 28.

18 **The wild goats**. The *yāt'el* (Ar. *wa'il*) derives its name from climbing ; David, the fleet of foot, could match this shy and elegant creature (1 Sam. xxiv. 2).—**The marmots** (Heb. *shāfān*, Ar. *wabr*) are a 'feeble folk,' but 'wise' enough to 'make their houses in the crags' (Prov. xxx. 24, 26). They are not now often *seen* in Palestine, but our poet, like David as Browning so finely describes him in *Saul*, may have been on familiar terms with the animal world.

19-23 The work of the fourth and (allusively) of the sixth day, illustrated by two fine poetic pictures, one of night, when man seeks repose, but the wild beasts, God's unconscious suppliants, roam abroad for food ; the other of day, when the beasts of prey hide them-

selves, but man calmly goes forth to his consciously realised and far from unhappy task. Again it is the Elohist and not the Jehovist by whom the writer is inspired (contrast the view of labour in Gen. iii. 17-19). For the priority of the *moon* comp. 'evening and morning' in Gen. i., and 'night and day' in Assyrian religious hymns.—**To measure times**, viz. those which rest on civil and religious law or custom (as Gen. i. 14). Cf. Sirach xliii. 7, ἀπὸ σελήνης σημεῖον ἑορτῆς.—**Man goes forth**. Observe ; the poet, with wise reticence, only hints at the work of the sixth day. God might declare man to be His crowning work ; but an individual man could not dwell on this thought (except indeed in the manner of Ps. viii.)

24-30 This strophè or stanza completes the poetic cosmogony. The poet bursts into an admiring eulogy of God's wonders upon the *earth*, but soon remembers that the sea, with all its stirring life, has been omitted. He repairs the omission in the finest way, so as to magnify creative wisdom (see below). Thus *vv.* 25, 26 are parallel to Gen. i. 20, 21 ; the following verses (27-30) remind us in part of Gen. i. 29, 30 ; comp. also cxlv. 15, 16, cxlvii. 9. Observe that the usual ten lines were insufficient for the rich contents of this strophè.

24 **In wisdom**. As Calvin observes, 'Nomine sapientiæ non excludit potentiam.' The poet means to say that the all-power, which is the first divine attribute man thinks of, is directed by wisdom : 'his wisdom hath stinted the effects of His power' (Hooker). We may add that 'wisdom' implies the attribute of love (see *v.* 27).—

Thy creatures. From the word rendered in cxxxix. 13 'create' (not however, בָּרָא, but קָנָה ; comp. Deut. xxxii. 6). The plural suits the verb 'is full of' better than the singular, though this reading has very large support, and is accepted by Baer. Sept. has τῆς κτίσεως or (according to the Latin versions) κτήσεως σου.

- 4 Enquire after Jehovah and his strength,
 be seeking his face continually.
- 5 Remember his wonders that he has done,
 his prodigies and the judgments of his mouth,
- 6 O ye seed of Abraham his servant,
 ye children of Jacob his chosen ones.
- 7 He, Jehovah, is our God,
 his judgments are in all the earth :
- 8 He remembers his covenant for ever,
 the word which he appointed for a thousand generations,
- 9 That which he contracted with Abraham,
 his oath also unto Isaac,
- 10 And which he confirmed unto Jacob for a statute,
 and to Israel for an everlasting covenant,
- 11 Saying, ' Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan,
 to be your measured inheritance.'
- 12 While they were still easily numbered,
 very few, and sojourners in the land,
- 13 And went about from nation to nation,
 from one kingdom to another people,
- 14 He suffered no man to oppress them,
 and punished kings for their sakes,
- 15 (Saying,) Touch not mine anointed ones,
 and do my prophets no harm.
- 16 And he summoned a famine on the land,
 he brake the whole staff of bread :
- 17 He sent a man before them,
 Joseph was sold to be a bondservant :
- 18 They galled his feet with fetters,
 his soul felt iron chains :
- 19 Until the time that his word came to pass,
 when the promise of Jehovah had assayed him.
- 20 The king sent and loosed him,
 the ruler of peoples, and let him go free.
- 21 He made him lord over his house,
 and ruler of all his possessions,
- 22 To bind his princes at pleasure,
 and to make his elders wise.
- 23 So Israel came into Egypt,
 and Jacob was a sojourner in the land of Ham ;
- 24 And he increased his people exceedingly,
 and made them stronger than their foes.

- 25 He turned their heart to hate his people,
to deal craftily with his servants.
- 26 He sent Moses his servant,
and Aaron whom he had chosen.
- 27 He set forth among them his varied signs,
and prodigies in the land of Ham.
- 28 He sent darkness, and it grew dark,
and yet they rebelled against his words
- 29 He turned their waters into blood,
and slew their fish.
- 30 Their land swarmed with frogs,
they came up into their kings' chambers.
- 31 He spake and the beetles came,
and gnats in all their borders.
- 32 For rains he gave them hail,
fiery flames in their land.
- 33 He smote their vines also and their fig-trees,
and brake in pieces the trees of their borders.
- 34 He spake, and the locusts came,
and caterpillars without number,
- 35 And ate up every herb in their land,
and ate up the fruit of their ground.
- 36 He smote also every first-born in their land,
the firstlings of all their strength ;
- 37 But those he brought out with silver and gold,
not a man that stumbled among his tribes.
- 38 Egypt rejoiced at their departing,
for their terror had fallen upon them.
- 39 He spread out clouds for a covering,
and fire to illumine the night.
- 40 They asked, and he brought quails,
and satisfied them with the bread of heaven.
- 41 He opened the rock and the waters gushed out,
they coursed through the desert as a river.
- 42 For he remembered his holy promise,
and Abraham his servant ;
- 43 And brought forth his people with joy,
his chosen ones with ringing cries ;
- 44 And gave them the lands of the nations,
and they inherited the toil of the peoples,
- 45 In order that they might keep his statutes,
and observe his laws.

6 For **his servant** Sept. has 'his servants.' This may possibly give the sense correctly; 'servant' may be a collective, and refer to 'seed.' 1 Chron. xvi. 13 reads 'seed of Israel,' which perhaps implies this view (comp. Isa. xli. 8, xlv. 4, &c.) In the parallel line, 'his chosen' (A.V.) refers to the 'children of Jacob.' See, however, *vv.* 42, 43, and comp. Gen. xxvi. 24.

8 Comp. cxi. 5, 9. Clearly this is not a psalm of the Exile. The peculiar phrase 'to a generation-thousand' comes from Deut. vii. 9; comp. Ex. xx. 6, Deut. v. 10.

15 **Touch not**, &c. The words are addressed to the kings of Egypt and the Philistines (comp. Gen. xii., xx., xxvi.) Abimelech threatens death to 'him that toucheth this man or his wife,' implying that these persons were sacred. Reverent students of Scripture idealised the patriarchs into kings, priests, or prophets (comp. on xcix. 6): traces of such a conception may indeed be found even in Genesis (see Gen. xx. 7). 'Anointed,' of course, need not mean more than 'consecrated to my service' (see on Isa. lxi. 1).

18 **His soul felt iron chains.** Lit., 'his soul went into the iron;' i.e. his inner being sympathised 'with the pain of his fettered limbs.' Comp. 'lest he tear my soul' (vii. 3), and similar passages. See crit. note.

19 **His word**, i.e. Joseph's prophetic word, which, at any rate at

first, was combined with the 'promise of Jehovah' to himself. The delay in the fulfilment of the promise **assayed** or purified his spiritual character.

23, 27 **In the land of Ham.** Suggested by lxxviii. 51 (comp. also *v.* 27 with lxxviii. 43; cf. Ex. x. 2, which justifies us in correcting the plural into the singular).

28 **And yet they rebelled.** (So Sept., Pesh.) Why does this not stand at the close of the plagues? Because a reason is required for the continuance of the judgments. This answer, it may be said, implies that the psalmist was ill informed as to the order of the plagues. Not so; he began his list with that which first occurred to his mind, and which was one of the most important. The text has, 'and they rebelled not,' i.e. presumably Moses and Aaron, who at another time did 'rebel' (Num. xx. 24, xxvii. 14).

37 **Not a man stumbled**, i.e. from weariness; comp. Isa. v. 27, 2 Chron. xxviii. 15 (where A.V.'s 'feeble' should be 'exhausted').

40 **The bread of heaven.** See on lxxviii. 24, 'the corn of heaven.'

41 Comp. the expressions with lxxviii. 20, 15, 16.

42 **His holy promise.** 'Holy' either in the wide sense of 'divine,' or in that of inviolable. I prefer the latter (see on lx. 8, and comp. 1 Sam. vi. 20, which also illustrates the phrase 'his words of holiness,' Jer. xxiii. 9).

PSALM CVI.

A RETROSPECT of the sins of the past (recent transgressions are too bitter to be treated in poetry), introduced by praise, prayer, and penitent confession, and strongly reminding us of Neh. ix. Reminiscences of the Pentateuch and of Exile and post-Exile writings abound. Some verses (1, 47, 48) of this psalm are incorporated into the psalm in 1 Chron. xvi.—one of the features which Ps. cvi. has in common with Ps. cv.

- 1 O give thanks unto Jehovah, for he is good,
for his lovingkindness endures for ever.
- 2 Who can tell out the valiant deeds of Jehovah,
or publish all his praise?

- 3 Happy are they that observe right,
and do righteousness at all times.
- 4 Think of me, O Jehovah, when thou favourest thy people
visit me with thy salvation ;
- 5 That I may look on the good fortune of thy chosen,
may rejoice in the joy of thy nation,
may glory with thine inheritance.
- 6 We have sinned with our fathers,
we have done perversely, wickedly.
- 7 Our fathers considered not thy wonders in Egypt,
remembered not thine abundant lovingkindnesses,
but were defiant at the sea, even by the Red Sea.
- 8 Yet he saved them for his name's sake
to make his might to be known.
- 9 For he rebuked the Red Sea, and it became dry,
and he led them through the floods as through the wilderness ;
- 10 And saved them from the hand of the malicious,
and released them from the hand of the enemy.
- 11 The waters covered their foes ;
not one of them remained.
- 12 Then believed they his words ;
they sang his praise.
- 13 Soon they forgot his works :
they did not wait for his purpose ;
- 14 But lusted a lust in the wilderness,
and tempted God in the desert ;
- 15 And he gave them their petition,
but sent wasting sickness against their soul.
- 16 They envied Moses also in the camp,
and Aaron the holy one of Jehovah.
- 17 The earth opened, and swallowed up Dathan,
and covered the company of Abiram ;
- 18 And fire kindled on their company,
the flame licked up the ungodly.
- 19 They made a calf at Horeb,
and worshipped a molten image.
- 20 Thus they exchanged his glory
for the image of an ox that eateth herbage.
- 21 They forgot God their saviour,
who had done great things in Egypt,
- 22 Wondrous things in the land of Ham,
terrible things by the Red Sea ;
- 23 And he said he would exterminate them.

but Moses his chosen one [arose],
and stood in the breach before him,
to turn away his wrath, that he might not destroy.

- 24 They held the delightful land for nought,
they believed not his word,
25 And murmured in their tents,
hearkening not unto the voice of Jehovah.
26 So he swore to them with uplifted hand
to cause them to fall in the wilderness ;
27 To scatter their seed among the nations,
and to winnow them in the lands.
28 They yoked themselves also unto Baal-peor,
and ate the sacrifices of the dead,
29 And vexed (Jehovah) by their doings,
and a plague broke in upon them.
30 Phinehas stood forth and interposed,
and so the plague was stayed ;
31 And that was counted unto him for righteousness
unto all generations for evermore.
32 And they stirred up indignation at the waters of Meribah,
and it went ill with Moses on their account ;
33 For they had been defiant towards God's spirit,
and he spoke at random with his lips.
34 They exterminated not the nations,
concerning whom Jehovah had commanded them,
35 But mingled themselves among the nations,
and learned their works ;
36 And they served their idols,
and these became a snare unto them,
37 For they sacrificed their sons,
their daughters also, to the demons,
38 And shed innocent blood,
the blood of their sons and of their daughters,
whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan,
so that the land was profaned with bloodshed ;
39 And they became unclean through their works,
and committed whoredom by their misdeeds.
40 Then did the anger of Jehovah burn against his people,
insomuch that he abhorred his inheritance ;
41 And he gave them into the hand of the nations,
and they that hated them ruled over them.
42 Their enemies oppressed them,
and they were made subject to their hand.

- 43 Many times did he deliver them,
but they clung defiantly to their own purpose,
and pinned away for their iniquity.
- 44 But he looked on their adversity,
when he heard their cry,
- 45 And remembered for them his covenant,
and relented according to his plenteous kindness,
- 46 And caused them to get compassion
from all those that carried them captives.
- 47 Save us, Jehovah our God,
and gather us from among the nations
to give thanks unto thy holy name,
to make our boast of thy praises.
- (Subscription to Book IV.)
- 48 Blessed be Jehovah, Israel's God,
from æon to æon ;
and let all the people say, Amen.
Hallelujah.

4, 5 The reference to the person of the psalmist (as most, perhaps rightly, view it) is surprising, when compared with *vv.* 6, 47 ('We have sinned;,' 'Save us'). An unusual effect is also produced by the recurrence of the same suffix (*-ka*) at the end of each of the five lines of these verses. Considering that many marginal glosses have intruded into the Hebrew texts, and that scribes are prone to insert petitions for themselves (generally at the end of MSS.), it is plausible to regard *vv.* 4, 5 with Bickell as an interpolated marginal note. Otherwise we may compare the parenthetical prayers for the writer in Nehemiah's chronicle. Social was not designed to overpower individual religion.

9 **Through the floods.** Comp. the fuller passage, Isa. lxiii. 13.

12 **Believed . . . sang.** Alluding to Ex. xiv. 31 and the songs in Ex. xv.

15 **Sent wasting sickness, &c.** For the expression, comp. Isa. x.

16. George Sandys gives a noble rendering of this line, 'Sent meager Death into their hungry Soules.'

16 **The holy one, &c.** Comp. 2 Kings iv. 9, 'a man of God, a holy one' (i.e. devoted to God's service)—the only parallel passage.

17 Why is not Korah mentioned? For the same reason as in Deut. xi. 6, because he was a Levite, and his name was dear to temple-poets.¹ Similar considerations must have led to the insertion of the notice in Num. xxvi. 11, 'but the sons of Korah perished not.'

20 'They exchanged the spiritual revelation of Jehovah in His manifold glorious attributes² (comp. Ex. xxxiv. 5-7, the proclamation of Jehovah's Name) for a material emblem which could at best symbolise only one of them (His power), and which might at worst suggest unseemly thoughts of God and be misapprehended and misused.' So the whole verse as rendered above may be explained. The reading 'their glory'

¹ See Geiger, *Urschrift*, p. 83; and on Num. xxvi. 11, Kuenen, *The Hexateuch*, p. 335.

² See H. Schultz, *Alttestamentliche Theologie*, ed. 2, p. 519.

is represented in early Jewish sources (e.g. *Ochla we-Öchla*, no. 68) as a correction introduced by 'the Scribes' (one of the *Tiqqunē Söferim*). Is the old reading correct? I agree with Nöldeke that this is 'doubtful, but perfectly possible.' I would even go further and say that it is rather probable. *Proclivi lectioni præstat ardua*, is a canon applicable here, if anywhere. There was an obvious reason for altering 'his glory' into 'their glory' (the received reading), the reverence of Jewish students being easily alarmed at phrases such as 'exchanging God's glory (the Shechinah, as they would interpret it) for an idol.'¹ A similar diversity of reading occurs in Hos. iv. 7, Jer. ii. 11. The versions as generally printed agree in each case with the received text (proving the antiquity of the alteration of the pronoun), except that Codd. Alex. and Sin. (as corrected) give in the Sept. of Ps. cvi. 20 τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ, and that the Targum of this passage has 'the glory of their Lord.' St. Paul too agrees with these authorities, if we may argue from the words in Rom. i. 23, καὶ ἠλλάξαν (Sept., ἠλλάξαντο) τὴν δόξαν τοῦ ἀφθάρτου θεοῦ ἐν ὀμοιώματι κ.τ.λ.² The received reading is, however, not in itself bad. 'Their glory' will mean 'him whom to serve is Israel's boast;' comp. Deut. x. 21, iv. 6-8. So in Am. viii. 7 Jehovah is called 'the Excellency of Jacob' (Reuss's *la gloire de Jacob* confounds two synonyms). See also above, on iv. 3.

21 God their saviour. See on iii. 3. Idols are 'things that do not profit' (Jer. ii. 8).

23 Said, i.e. resolved (as iv. 5). The phrase comes from Deut. ix. 25.

24-27 The phrasing is partly derived from Pentateuch-passages—Num. xiv. 31; Deut. i. 27; Ex. vi. 8, Deut. xxxii. 40; Num. xiv. 29, 32.

24 The delightful land.

¹ See Geiger, *op. cit.*, p. 316.

² Delitzsch (on Romans) compares *Sifri* 53 a, כְּבֹהֵי בְּאֵלֵהֶי נֹכַח וְיִשְׂרָאֵל

Lit., 'the land of desire.' So Jer. iii. 19, Zech. vii. 14.

27 To scatter their seed, &c. Based upon Ezek. xx. 23, which enables us to correct with certainty the erroneous repetition at the beginning of the verse.

28 They yoked themselves. A phrase taken from Num. xxv. 3, and sometimes thought to be suggestive of some licentious rite; against which view see my note on Hos. ix. 10. 'Yoking' is an expression for the mystic, quasi-physical union supposed to exist between a god and his worshippers, and to be kept up by sacrificial meals (see on Isa. xlv. 11, and cf. Judg. vi. 34 R.V. marg.)—**The sacrifices of the dead.** See Num. xxv. 2. The 'dead' are opposed to the 'living God.' Nothing suggests a reference to funeral offerings, like those of Egypt.

29 A plague. The Hebrew (as in Num. xxv. 8) indicates the slaughter wrought by judicial authority upon the offenders. So in 1 Sam. iv. 17, 2 Sam. xvii. 9 it means the slaughter accompanying a defeat.

30 Interposed, viz. as a mediator. Another possible meaning is, 'judged' (comp. 1 Sam. ii. 25). But the impalement of the guilty Israelites was an act of judgment (Num. xxv. 3). Mediation now became requisite, Jehovah and the people being regarded as two contending parties. Sept. therefore renders well, though freely, ἐξιλάσατο.

32 The 'object' is omitted, as in v. 29. But that the divine 'indignation' is meant, is clear from the usage of the word (Deut. ix. 7, 8, 22).

33 This verse gives the cause of the adversity which befell Moses (comp. Deut. i. 37), viz. that Moses (see Num. xx. 10) spoke words, which being unbelieving (*ibid.* v. 12), were mere babbling or βαρρολογία (note the Hebrew). The

cause of this 'babbling' is also explained, viz. that the people (hardly Moses and Aaron, as Kimchi) had 'defied his (i.e. Jehovah's) spirit' (a condensed reference to Isa. lxiii. 10; comp. Ps. lxxviii. 40). Thus the lines of vv. 32, 33 are alternately parallel.

34 The subjugation of the Canaanites was not, according to the psalmist, complete. He infers this from the assimilation by the Israelites of much that was properly Canaanitish. Here we are on the confines of a great historical problem.

37 **To the demons.** Need it be said that the word 'demons' (*δαίμονες*) does not here imply that the objects of worship were 'evil spirits'?¹ The psalmist simply takes a current name for one class of divinities (or superhuman

powers), and extends its reference to any and every deity to whose worship the Israelites fell away. *Shēdim*, here rendered 'demons,' is the plural of *shēd*, and connected with Ass. *šidu*, which, like *lamassu*, stands for the genii or (may we say?) demigods, who were subordinate to the gods strictly so-called, and were represented by the symbolic winged bulls placed at the entrance of Assyrian palaces. The *shēdim*, who are so prominent in later Jewish theology, are only mentioned again in the Bible in Deut. xxxii. 17 (a work of the Assyrian or Babylonian period), where they are defined as 'not god.' Comp. the discussion in Baudissin, *Studien zur semit. Religionsgeschichte*, i. 130-136.

38 **Was profaned.** Cf. Num. xxxv. 33, and see on Isa. xxiv. 5.

¹ Sept., however, renders *δαίμονιους* both here and in Deut. xxxii. 17, and the Peshitto gives *shēdo* as the rendering of *δαίμων* and *δαμόνιον* in the N. T. (similarly Delitzsch gives *shēd*).

BOOK V.

PSALM CVII.

*V*ERSES 1-32 consist of a series of picturesque descriptions each closed by a refrain, and exhibiting the contrast between present peace and past tribulation. It is therefore virtually another hymn to Providence. At first, indeed, the psalmist simply intended a thanksgiving for Israel's restoration, but to fill out his poem he included some scenes not connected with that great turning-point. He seems to have been a special admirer of Job and II. Isaiah. At *v.* 33 the treatment becomes more meagre, the connexion less cared for, and the thought less original. The refrains too are dropped.

- 1 O give thanks unto Jehovah, for he is good,
for his lovingkindness endures for ever.
- 2 Thus let the released of Jehovah say,
whom he hath released from the hand of the foe,
- 3 And gathered out of the lands,
from the east and from the west,
from the north and from the south.
- 4 They wandered in the wilderness, yea, in the desert,
they found no road to a city of habitation :
- 5 Hungry and thirsty,
their soul fainted in them.
- 6 So they cried unto Jehovah in their strait,
and he delivered them out of their distresses,
- 7 He directed them also by a straight way,
that they might go to a city of habitation.
- 8 O let these give thanks unto Jehovah for his kindness,
and for his wondrous works to the children of men !
- 9 For he has satisfied the longing soul,
and filled the hungry soul with good.
- 10 Those that sat in darkness and in death-shadow,
bondsmen of affliction and iron—
- 11 Because they had defied the commands of God,
and reviled the purpose of the most High,
- 12 So that he bowed their heart down with travail,
they stumbled, and there was none to help ;

- 13 But they cried unto Jehovah in their strait,
and he saved them out of their distresses,
14 Brought them out of darkness and death-shadow,
and tore away their bonds—
15 O let these give thanks unto Jehovah for his kindness,
and for his wondrous works to the children of men !
16 For he has broken the gates of ~~brass~~ *bronze*
and hewed the bars of iron in sunder.
- 17 Sick men, who for the way of their transgression
and for their iniquities suffered affliction—
18 Their soul abhorred all manner of food,
and they drew nigh unto the gates of Death,
19 But they cried unto Jehovah in their strait,
and he saved them out of their distresses,
20 He sent his word to heal them,
and caused them to escape from their pitfalls—
21 O let these give thanks unto Jehovah for his kindness,
and for his wondrous works to the children of men,
22 And offer the sacrifices of thanksgiving,
and recount his works amid cries that ring.
- 23 They that go down upon the sea in ships,
that do business on the great waters,
24 These men see the works of Jehovah,
and his wonders in the ocean-gulf.
25 For he spake, and caused a stormy wind to appear
which lifted up the waves thereof ;
26 They went up to the sky, they came down to the abyesses,
their soul melted away in the trouble ;
27 They reeled and staggered like a drunken man,
and all their wisdom was swallowed up.
28 But they cried unto Jehovah in their strait,
and he brought them out of their distresses.
29 He turned the storm into a soft air,
and the waves thereof were hushed.
30 Then were they glad, because they were laid to rest,
and he guided them to their wished-for haven.
31 O let these give thanks to Jehovah for his kindness,
and for his wondrous works to the children of men ;
32 Let them exalt him also in the congregation of the people,
and praise him in the company of the elders.
- 33 He turned rivers into a wilderness,
and watercourses into thirsty ground ;

- 34 A fruitful land into a salt waste,
for the wickedness of them that dwell therein
- 35 He turned the wilderness into a standing water,
and dry ground into watercourses ;
- 36 And there he made the hungry to dwell,
and they founded a city of habitation.
- 37 They sowed fields and planted vineyards,
and obtained fruits of increase.
- 38 He blessed them, and they multiplied exceedingly,
and their cattle he diminished not.
- 39 And when they were minished and brought low
through oppression of trouble and heaviness,
- 41 He set the needy secure from affliction,
and made him families like a flock ;
- 42 The upright see it, and rejoice,
and all unrighteousness stops its mouth.
- 43 Whoso is wise, let him observe these things,
and let them understand the kindnesses of Jehovah.

1-3. Cf. cxviii. 2-4, and also Isa. lxii. 12 ; xliii. 5, 6 ; xlix. 12. In the last-named passage, as here, the text unsuitably has 'from the sea,' which in this context could only, I think, in accordance with Hebrew usage, mean 'from the west.' The connexion, **from the south**, is an easy one (see *Isaiah*, ii. 16, 165).—**Out of the lands**, i.e. out of foreign lands (comp. cv. 44, cvi. 27), just as 'the nations' means 'foreign nations.'

10 Comp. cxliii. 3*b*, Isa. ix. 1, Job xxxvi. 8 ; and for the sense of 'iron,' Ps. cv. 18.

16 That great word of faith, Isa. xlv. 2, has been fulfilled—in the spirit, if not in the letter (see *Isaiah*, i. 293).

17 At this point the *tableaux* cease to have a special reference to the surmounted trials of the Exiles ; comp. the following one with that in Elihu's speech (Job xxxiii. 19-26).—**Sick men**. The text has 'foolish ones.' Can this be right? Does not the context require a word significant of the physical condition of the sufferers? One remembers indeed that sin and

sickness are closely connected in the O. T. Among the many proofs of this, see Isa. xxxiii. 24, Ps. xxxi. 11, and especially Ps. xxxviii. 6, where a sick man accounts for his 'wounds' by his 'foolishness' (the cognate substantive to the adjective here used). It would therefore be perfectly intelligible if our psalmist had written 'their foolishness' for 'their transgression.' But the poet must be credited with sound judgment, the laws of which are the same in the East and in the West. Can we conceive him introducing a fresh *tableau* by an ethical term such as 'fools' (Prov. i. 7 and often)? Let us consider *v.* 10 and *v.* 23, and in this very stanza *v.* 18*a* and *v.* 20*a*, before answering.

18 A reminiscence of Job xxxiii. 20, 22.—**The gates of Death**. See on ix. 14.

20 **He sent his word**. Such a phrase prepares the way for the Targumic use of קִימָרָה דְיָ 'the Word of the Lord' for יהוה. Comp. cxlvii. 15, 18, and see on xxxiii. 6, Isa. ix. 8.

23-32 Mohammed, too, full of the thought of God's liberality

points to the ships and their deliverances, for which men are so ungrateful (*Korán*, Sur. xvii. 68-72).

23 **That go down, &c.** Or, 'that have gone down.' 'Upon the sea;' the surface of the sea being below the level of the land. Comp. Isa. xlii. 10.

26 **They went up to the sky,** viz. the shipmen, not the waves, in spite of the seductive parallel in Ovid's *Tristia* (i. 2, 27-32).—**The abysses.** Not 'the abyss' (as Street; cf. xxxvi. 7); the ocean-deep is made up of deeps below deeps. Cf. cxxxv. 6, cxlviii. 7.

29 **The waves thereof.** Lit. 'their waves.' Had rhythm allowed, the poet would have quoted 'his waves' from *v.* 25. But the plural suffix can be justified (awkwardly, no doubt) by 'great waters' in *v.* 23.

30 **To their wished-for haven.** 'Haven' (or 'mart') is near enough to the sense. The word *mākhōz* is doubtless of Babylonian origin, and its Assyrio-Babylonian equivalent means 'city.' So also does *mākhōzā* in the Babylonian Talmud (see Levy's Lexicon), though this is also the proper name of a city on the Tigris, chiefly inhabited by Jews (see *Yoma* 11*a*). Our psalmist evidently limits the sense of the word; he thinks of cities of commercial rather than of political importance. See crit. note.

33 The hymn of praise for God's manifold deliverances is succeeded by specimens of His equally manifold providential dealings with countries and nations. The reference is in no case to be confined to any single historical event. The details are given in familiar language

reminding one of earlier writings, such as Job and II. Isaiah. Comp. *v.* 33 with Isa. i. 2, xxxv. 7.

34 **Into a salt waste.** The poet generalises from events like the destruction of Sodom (cf. Tristram, *Land of Israel*, p. 367). Cf. Jer. xvii. 6, Job. xxxix. 6, also Ecclus. xxxix. 6 (where *ἀλμη* suggests that Sirach knew the Sept. of our psalm).

35 Imitated from Isa. xli. 18.

38*b* A poetic understatement for effect.

39 The transition is abrupt; we have just heard that at any rate 'their cattle' had not diminished. Hitzig supposes that by an awkward retrogression (cf. Driver, *Hebrew Tenses*, § 76, *Obs.*) the time preceding God's gracious gifts (*vv.* 35-38) is referred to; Delitzsch, that a subsequent change in the fortunes of the persons so blessed is indicated. To me it seems as if the author of the appendix (*vv.* 33-43) strung sentences together without much reflexion. Still more evident is this, if he really inserted *v.* 40, which is taken from Job xii. 21*a*, 24*b*. This verse, however, so seriously disturbs the logical sequence and obscures the sense that I follow Bickell in rejecting it as an interpolation. In the best editions of the Massoretic text, an inverted Nun stands before this verse, and also before *vv.* 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28. Did the ancient critics regard all these verses as spurious? So think Geiger and Böttcher; but this is uncertain (cf. Strack, *Prolegomena Critica*, p. 91).

43 Comp. Hos. xiv. 9 (there too a closing formula).

PSALM CVIII.

See Psalm LVII. 7-11, LX. 5-12.

PSALM CIX.

THE speaker, representing the pious kernel of the nation, complains of persecuting enemies, particularly of one who is high in office and foremost in malignity. More fearful anathemas than this psalm contains can hardly be conceived. The misuse made of them in Calvin's time

(see his note on *v.* 6, and below on Ps. cxlix.) is a warning to us not to idolise even so precious a gift as the Psalter. We cannot (see Luke ix. 55) justify such expressions; can we excuse them?¹ An enquiry into the circumstances of the psalmist will, I think, give the only solid grounds for doing so. Would that I had space for this here. At any rate, he is not eminent as a poet. Contrast his ineffective elaboration of the idea that a 'curse causeless' falls back on the speaker with the measured expressions of a Vedic poet (*Rig Veda*, i. 147, 4, Grassmann).

- 2 O God of my praise, hold not thy peace,
for the mouth of ungodliness and deceit have they opened upon
me,
they have spoken against me with lying tongue;
- 3 And with words of hatred have they surrounded me,
and fought against me without a cause.
- 4 In return for love, they behaved as mine adversaries,
whilst I was all prayer;
- 5 Yea, they rendered me evil for good,
and hatred for my love.
- 6 Set thou an ungodly man over him,
and let an adversary stand at his right hand.
- 7 When he is accused, let him go forth condemned,
and let his prayer pass for a sin.
- 8 Let his days be few;
his store let another take.
- 9 Let his children be orphans,
and his wife a widow.
- 10 Let his children be vagabonds, and beg,
yea, let them be driven from their desolate home.
- 11 Let the creditor ensnare all that he has,
and let foreigners take his labour for a prey.
- 12 Let him have none that continues kindness to him,
neither any that has pity on his orphans.
- 13 Let his posterity be cut off as their doom,
in the next generation let their name be blotted out.
- 14 Let the iniquity of his fathers be mentioned before Jehovah,
and the sin of his mother—let it not be blotted out.
- 15 Let them be over against Jehovah continually,
and let him cut off their memory from the earth.
- 16 And that because he thought not to show lovingkindness,
but persecuted the afflicted and needy,
and the desponding in mind, to murder him,

¹ The theory of Kennicott, Mendelssohn, Dr. C. Taylor, and, as it seems, Canon Westcott (*Cathedral Psalter*), which puts the curses into the mouth of the psalmist's enemy, however plausible it may seem, labours under insuperable difficulties (see Perowne, and Jennings and Lowe).

- 17 And he loved cursing (so it will come to him),
and delighted not in blessing (so it will be far from him) ;
- 18 And clothed himself with cursing even as with his robe
(so it will come into his inward parts like water,
and like oil into his bones).
- 19 Let it be unto him as a vesture wherein he wraps himself,
and as a girdle wherewith he binds himself continually.
- 20 Be these the wages of mine adversaries from Jehovah,
and of them that speak evil against my soul.
- 21 And thou, Jehovah Lord, do nobly for me for thy name's sake ;
because thy lovingkindness is so good, deliver thou me.
- 22 For afflicted am I, and needy,
and my heart is wounded within me :
- 23 Like a shadow when it stretches out, I disappear ;
I am shaken off as the locust :
- 24 My knees totter from fasting,
and my flesh falls away into leanness :
- 25 And I—I am become a reproach unto them,
when they see me they shake their head.
- 26 Help me, Jehovah my God,
save me, according to thy lovingkindness :
- 27 That they may know that this is thy hand,
and that thou, Jehovah, hast done it.
- 28 They may curse, but thou dost bless ;
when they arise, they will be confounded,
but thy servant will rejoice.
- 29 Mine adversaries will be clothed with disgrace,
and wrap themselves in their shame as in a mantle.
- 30 I will give great thanks unto Jehovah with my mouth,
and praise him in the midst of many,
- 31 Because he stands at the right hand of the needy,
to save him from those that judge his soul.

2 False witness was always one great means of persecution (as xxvii. 12, xxxv. 11) ; but in all such passages it represents a class of hostile actions (see on xxvii. 12).
—**Ungodliness** here means 'unrighteousness' (comp. *v.* 7, and see on *v.* 6).

4 **In return for love.** Comp. xxxv. 13, lxix. 11, 12 ; Jer. xviii. 20.
—**I was all prayer.** For the construction see cx. 3, cxx. 7. Most commentators render 'I *am* all

prayer,' and suppose the writer to mean that he seeks refuge and comfort in prayer. But what sort of prayer is that which follows, the effect of which is only to let loose a flood of unpurified passion? (Compare introd.) The immediate context, however, compared with xxxv. 13, suggests a different explanation, 'I was all prayer for them.' So the Peshitto and Ibn Ezra. There must, I fear, be some error in the text.

6 **Set thou . . . over him**, viz. with the authority of a judge. The Peshitto has 'over them,' and keeps the plural reference throughout, probably because he applied the imprecations to the enemies of Jesus Christ. But evidently some great personage is referred to; and hence the special mention of some greater (heathen) personage by whom he is displaced. The term **ungodly** (*rāshā'*) in this passage probably means 'heathen' (comp. lxviii. 3), in spite of the purely ethical reference of the noun in *v.* 2, and the forensic use of the adjective in *v.* 7. For it is surely implied that there is some profound difference between the judge and the accused. An adversary, or, as the context seems to some to suggest, a false accuser. The word (*sāṭān*) having no article, we might take it as a proper name, as in 1 Chron. xxi. 1, 'And Satan stood up against Israel.' If we so explain it, we must, however, with Hitzig, go further, and say that God is the judge. This view may no doubt be confirmed by *v.* 7*b*, and by a seemingly parallel passage (Zech. iii. 1), but is opposed by *v.* 6*a* (which Hitzig boldly renders, 'Erkenne gegen ihn: schuldig!'). But are we bound to take *sāṭān* as a proper name? Surely not. On *v.* 7*b* I will speak presently; with regard to Zech. iii. 1, does the parallelism go further than the use of a legal phrase? For the right hand as the place of the accuser, comp. also Job xxx. 12, 'Upon my right hand rise the rabble' (R.V.).

7 **Condemned**. A third and more technical meaning of *rāshā'* (see on *vv.* 2, 6). The context implies that a sentence of capital punishment is meant.—**Let his prayer pass for a sin**. This clause has been felt difficult, both on account of the seeming limitation of God's mercy and because of the context (see on *v.* 6). But unlimited mercy is not a doctrine of the Old Testament. 'The sacrifice of the ungodly is an abomination to Jehovah; but the prayer of

the upright is his delight,' is a proverb in which 'sacrifice' and 'prayer' are virtually synonymous (Prov. xv. 8; comp. xxviii. 9). As to the context, this is not really inconsistent with the view adopted above. The idea of the earthly judge suggests that of the heavenly judge, as in xxxvii. 33. The ungodly man, when he falls into the hands of a tyrant, and, like many an innocent man in his own day of power (Prov. xxiv. 11), is being 'dragged away to death,' prays despairingly to the national God, Jehovah. But Jehovah is not a mere national God.

8 **His store**. Following the sense of the word in Isa. xv. 7. For the idea of the clause, see xlix. 11. Others render 'his office;,' but the whole picture, after *v.* 7, is one of poverty and misery.

10 **Let them be driven, &c.** This line explains the first. The ruined home precedes the begging family. In order of time, however, the events of *v.* 11 precede that of *v.* 10*b*. The text-reading, 'let them seek [bread, fleeing] from their desolate home,' is both unnatural and weak in sense.

14, 15 The curse opens out backward in accordance with Ex. xx. 5.—**Be mentioned**. Comp. 1 Kings xvii. 18.—**Let them be**, viz. the sins of his forefathers.

16 **Because he thought not, &c.** The 'law of kindness' (if we may so apply a fine phrase in Prov. xxxi. 26) is in the first rank of Jehovah's commandments (Hos. vi. 6, Mic. vi. 8). The ungodly man neglected this, and, instead of cherishing the poor, carried on his persecution to the bitter end.—**The desponding in mind**. 'Desponding,' not merely because 'over-awed' by bad men (x. 18), but because of the delay of God's promised lovingkindness. Comp. Isa. lxi. 3, lxvi. 2 (striking parallels).

17, 18 **So it will come, &c.** Lit., 'so it came,' &c. The parenthetical clauses represent future events as ideally past. 'Crime and punishment,' according to an Indian

proverb, 'grow out of one stem ;' 'when Ephraim offended by Baal,' says Hosea (xiii. 1), 'he died.' Notice the climax of the imagery in *v.* 18.

20 **Be these the wages, &c.** Surely this verse is inconsistent with Kennicott's view (see *intro.*) If the preceding imprecations were a quotation from the 'ungodly man,' would not the psalmist have said, 'Not upon me, Jehovah, not upon me, but upon mine adversaries let this curse come'?

22 **For afflicted, &c.** Comp.

the softening of another psalmist's mood in *lxix.* 30, 'And as for me, I am afflicted and sore pained.'

23 **Like a shadow, &c.** The figure seems borrowed from *cii.* 12. —**As the locust,** a helpless, unsteady creature ; comp. *Job xxxix.* 20.

25 Comp. *lxix.* 11-13, *xxii.* 8.

26-31 Lamentation gives way to assured hope, as in *xxii.*, *lxix.*

31 How finely Jehovah is said to place Himself at the right hand (comp. *xvi.* 8, *cxxi.* 5), ready to repel any false accuser (comp. *v.* 6).

PSALM CX. *acrostic*] *YBU*

DIVINE oracles and lyric anticipations addressed to the king. The poem is so abrupt and rugged in style that one can well believe it to have lost some distichs. Its historical interpretation is correspondingly difficult ; nor have I space to discuss rival hypotheses. To me, it appears like an imitation of *Ps.* ii. ; but I am not positive that we can follow the analogy of that psalm in our interpretation. *Ps.* cx. may perhaps refer to the ideal or Messianic king himself (cf. *The Prophecies of Isaiah*, ii. 200) ; but it is equally possible to explain it of some historical ruler regarded as typically Messianic. Ewald assigns the authorship to some prophet like Gad or Nathan. But even simple psalmists are found elsewhere to claim prophetic inspiration (cf. on *lxii.* 12), and we must not be too sure that we know what sort of poetry Gad or Nathan would write.

- 1 Jehovah's oracle touching my lord, 'Be enthroned at my right hand,
till I make thine enemies a footstool for thee.'
- 2 Thine overpowering sceptre doth Jehovah stretch forth from Zion ;
'Have sway in thine enemies' midst.'
- 3 All alacrity are thy people in the day of thy muster upon the holy mountains ;
from the womb of the morning-sky comes to thee the dew of thy youth.
- 4 Jehovah swears irrevocably, 'Thou art priest for ever,
after the manner of Melchizedek.'
- 5 The Lord is at thy right hand ;
he shatters kings in his angry day, giving doom amidst nations.
- 6 Full is the wide field of corpses ; he shatters heads thereon.
- 7 Of the brook doth he drink in the way ; therefore can he lift up his head.

1 The first oracle, either freshly received by the psalmist, or taken by him from some book and put

into a new form (cf. ii. 7-9). It is an irregularity (not unparalleled, however—see on *Isa.* lvi. 8) for the

phrase **Jehovah's oracle** to *introduce* a divine utterance.—**Touching my lord.** 'My lord' is the customary title of respect in addressing a king, or indeed any superior (see 1 Sam. xxii. 12, xxiv. 8, Gen. xxiii. 6). Hence the second person in *vv.* 2, 3.—**Be enthroned, &c.** Mount Zion is the earthly symbol of the invisible 'mountain of Elohim.' Jehovah upon his throne summons Israel's king to become his *πάρεδρος* (Pind. *Ol.* viii. 22); comp. ii. 5. Nor is this an empty honour (cf. 1 Kings ii. 19); it involves a share in the world's government. The king of Israel is as much the deputy of Jehovah as the Assyrian king is the vicegerent of Assur (see, e.g., *Records of the Past*, xi. 3); his rule is the 'royalty of Jehovah by the hand of the sons of David' (2 Chron. xiii. 8; cf. 1 Chron. xxviii. 5, xxix. 23). Hence in Zech. xiii. 7 Jehovah calls the king 'my fellow' (בן עמיתי).

2 **Have sway, &c.** Again the words of Jehovah, which have a self-fulfilling power (see on Isa. ix. 8).

3 Martial Israelites stream to the royal banner (comp. Judg. v. 2, 9, Heb.) It is an early morning muster; and suddenly (cf. 2 Sam. xvii. 11, 12) as the

dewdrops which the sun
Impears on every leaf and every flow'r
(Milton's figure for the angel-hosts), and not less past counting than these, there seems to start up on all sides a youthful army, brimming over with that freshness and vigour of which 'dew' in the prophets (Hos.

xiv. 5, Isa. xxvi. 19) is the symbol. Such is the imaginative picture. The expressions are partly borrowed from myth. The sky was conceived of by the early men as shedding an impregnating influence on the earth (see on Isa. xlv. 8), and so the dewdrops which 'the skies drop down' (Prov. iii. 20)¹ could poetically be described as 'children of the dawn' (or, to give the force of מְשֵׁתָר, 'of the morning-sky'²). This is at least a not unworthy view of the meaning; it assumes, however, that there *is* such a word as מְשֵׁתָר, and it may seem to some too poetical for our psalmist. Another possible rendering (point מְשֵׁתָר) of line 2 is, 'from the womb, from the very dawn, (devoted) to thee is thy youthful band' (Geiger, *Urschrift*, p. 29). Youth is here taken to be compared to the dawn, just as Job calls his mature age his 'autumn,' Job xxix. 4 (שְׁהָרוֹת) in Eccles. xi. 10 can scarcely be quoted); the same figure is not unknown to the Talmud.³ But does not 'dew' hang in the air, so to speak, without the support of some elucidating words? Hence Bickell's suggestion that טל may have been miswritten⁴ for יל in ילדותך seems a necessary supplement to Geiger's view. Line 2 thus becomes a statement that the young warriors have been devoted to Israel's king since their infancy—have drunk in loyalty to 'God and the king' at their mothers' breasts (cf. xxii. 10, 11). But I prefer to adhere to the text; מְשֵׁתָר may be a rare word brought out by the

¹ So Lane (*Arabic Lexicon*, s.v. *falla*) quotes the phrase, 'The sky rained small rain (*fallat*) upon the earth,' which suggests the question whether Heb. *fal*, like Ar. *fallan*, may not often mean the fine shower or night-mist which is more than the equivalent of 'dew' in Palestine in the hot months of late summer. See Neil, *Palestine Explored*, p. 129, &c.

² Mr. Neil interprets מְשֵׁתָר of the 'fleece, enfolding clouds' of night-mist from out of which an autumn morning appears to emerge, and which after glistening awhile in the brilliant light are sucked up by the sun, leaving behind them a delightful moisture (*Pal. Expl.*, p. 138). This helps us to realise the possibility of a Semitic dew-myth such as seems to be alluded to in Job xxxviii. 28.

³ See *Jebamoth*, 62 b (Wünsch, *Der bab. Talmud*, ii. 1, p. 17), where 'morning' and 'evening' in Eccles. xi. 6 are explained of youth and age.

⁴ Bickell appeals to the Septuagint, which, however, omits to translate not only טל but ל, suggesting that the Hebrew text used had both words or neither.

poet ; or the whole phrase may be borrowed from some old poem now lost.—**Upon the holy mountains**, i.e. at Jerusalem (see lxxvii. 1, cxxxiii. 3), whence the army set forth. The text has, 'in hallowed splendours;' cf. 2 Chron. xx. 21 ; but see crit. note.

4 A fresh revelation, affecting not merely the king, but his family. Note the solemnity of the introduction (Heb. vii. 21). The person addressed is already a king (the Maccabees were to all intents and purposes as such kings as David was, even before Aristobulus assumed the regal title) ; he may or may not be also a subordinate priest ; but he is now to be inducted into the office of priest *par excellence*, with the promise that the office shall descend to his posterity (cf. 1 Sam. ii. 35) and a confirmation of his royal dignity. In a word, he is to be a priest-king. If a Davidic prince is meant, comp. 2 Sam. vi. 14, &c., 1 Chron. xxix. 10, 1 Kings viii. 14, 55 ; if a Maccabee, 1 Macc. x. 21, xiv. 41 ; if the Messiah, Zech. iii. 8, vi. 11-13 (Delitzsch regards the parallel as complete, *Messianic Prophecy*, pp. 97, 98 ; see, however, Riehm, *Die messianische Weissagung*, ed. 2, pp. 146, 147).—**After the manner** (or, in accordance with the relation or state) of **Melchizedek** (Gen. xiv. 18), and not merely of Aaron and

of Zadok. The allusion is a happy one, Salem being shortened from Jerusalem (see on lxxvi. 3) and Melchizedek suggesting some of the chief attributes of the idealised or Messianic king—righteousness before God, prosperity (i.e. righteousness before man, Isa. liv. 17), and legitimacy.

5 The description in *vv.* 2, 3 is resumed. **The Lord** is Jehovah (surely not the king), who is invisibly standing at His viceroy's right hand (see xvi. 8, cxxi. 5, and cf. Rameses in battle, *Records of the Past*, ii. 70).—**Shatters kings** ; so *v.* 6 (alluding to lxviii. 22, Hab. iii. 13, 14) ; cf. ii. 9.—**Giving doom**, &c. A Messianic feature (vii. 9, ix. 9, xcvi. 10).

6 The expression is awkward ; but the sense is clear (cf. last note). Perowne, however, has 'heads over wide lands.'

7 Cf. Judg. vii. 5, 2 Sam. xxiii. 15, and Shakespeare's lines—
Three times they breath'd, and three
times did they drink,
Upon agreement, of swift Severn's flood.
(*King Henry IV.*, Act 1, Scene 3.)

Has not something dropped out of the text? Perowne's admirable paraphrase certainly suggests this, 'Then with renewed ardour, with head erect and kindling eye, [the king] continues the pursuit. Thus shall victory be crowned, and not a foe remain.'

PSALM CXI.

Pss. cxi. and cxii. are twin psalms. They are both 'alphabetical' in the full sense, each of the three-toned lines beginning with one of the twenty-two Hebrew letters taken in order ; and in both psalms the last two verses are tristichs. In contents they are still more closely akin. Ps. cxii. is a 'heilige Parodie' (Hengstenberg phrases it) of Ps. cxi., designed to suggest the lesson of Matt. v. 48. Probably enough they are both by the same author, who is equally at home in the law, the history, and the wisdom of Israel.

- 1 I will thank Jehovah with my whole heart,
in the council and assembly of the upright.
- 2 Great are the works of Jehovah
to be studied of all that delight therein.

- 3 Glorious and grand is his doing,
and his righteousness abides eternally.
- 4 A memorial has he made for his wonders :
Jehovah is full of pity and compassion.
- 5 Food has he given unto them that fear him,
he is ever mindful of his covenant.
- 6 The might of his works has he declared to his people,
giving them the heritage of the nations.
- 7 The works of his hands are truth and justice,
all his behests are faithful ;
- 8 They are established eternally and for ever,
wrought out in truth and uprightness.
- 9 He has sent deliverance unto his people,
he has appointed his covenant for ever ;
holy and reverend is his name.
- 10 The fear of Jehovah is the beginning of wisdom,
good discernment have all such as practise them ;
his praise abides eternally.

1 **The upright.** Comp. (in a semi-alphabetical psalm) xxxiii. 1, where 'upright' alternates with 'righteous.' Righteousness was in truth the aspiration of the post-Exile community. A pre-Exile poet may have coined the word *Jeshurun* (Εὐθύς, Aq., Symm., Theod.), but Ezra and his fellows made the name in some measure a reality, and the psalmist would fain confirm and deepen their work by insisting on the moral and spiritual character of true Israelites (comp. cxii. 1, 2).

2 **To be studied, &c.** Might we with Sept. adopt another reading,¹ 'studied (lit. sought out) with regard to all his purposes' (ἐξήρτημένα εἰς πάντα τὰ θελήματα αὐτοῦ)? This word gives an excellent sense; the works of God are not to be studied as mere external facts, but as the monuments of His gracious purposes (for the rendering 'purpose,' comp. Isa. liii. 10, 'the pleasure (or, purpose) of Jehovah'). If it seems not worth while to desert the text, might we render,

'studied with regard to all their precious things'? 'All precious things,' says the wise man, 'do not equal wisdom' (Prov. viii. 11, iii. 15); but the saying is perhaps too uncommon for such a plain writer. I therefore retain the common rendering, though to my feeling as well as to Hitzig's it is tautological (comp. Mal. iii. 1). Delitzsch, in eds. 1-3, rendered 'according to all their objects;' but the sense intended would perhaps have been expressed otherwise (comp. Prov. xvi. 4*a*). He has now returned to the usual rendering.

3 **His righteousness.** Comp. cxii. 3, where man's righteousness has the same permanency predicted of it. 'Righteousness' and 'lovingkindness' are closely connected ideas, both have relation to the twofold covenant;² yet we must not render with Dathe, 'Benignitas ejus sibi semper constat,' for the divine 'righteousness' has its stern side (Ex. xxxiv. 7*a*).

4 **A memorial,** viz. a constant tradition (comp. lxxviii. 3), con-

¹ In Sept.'s interesting version of xvi. 3 we again meet with τὰ θελήματα αὐτοῦ.

² Viz. that which unites Jehovah to Israel and the members of Israel to one another. See *Hosea* (Cambridge Bible), pp. 29, 30.

firmed by observances like the Passover (Ex. xii. 14).—**Jehovah**, &c. So ciii. 8.

5 **Food.** Marg. A.V. and R.V., 'prey.' Fresh green food is, however, the primary meaning of *téref* (Ar. *ratba*). God's people are likened, not to wild but to tame beasts; comp. Isa. lxiii. 14, and the comparison of Israel to a flock in the Asaphite psalms. Note too that both in Prov. xxxi. 15 and in Mal. iii. 10, where the same word is used of man's sustenance, vegetable food is meant. (Of course the choice of the word here was prompted by the necessary initial letter: see introd.) Does the psalmist allude (as Del. thinks) to the manna? An exclusive reference must be denied (comp. xxxvii. 25).

9 **He sent deliverance.** Not merely at the Exodus, but again

and again. 'Thy God' is a permanent title of Israel's God (xlvi. 4, and elsewhere).—**Holy and reverend.** Comp. xcix. 3. One of the principal elements in the conception of Jehovah's 'holiness' is an irresistible might. Comp. Isa. xxix. 23.

10a A commonplace of the sages of Israel (see Prov. i. 7, ix. 10, and cf. Job xxviii. 28, Sirach i. 20). It means that the **beginning** or foundation (some render 'chief part,' but this will not suit Prov. ix. 10) of true wisdom is true religion. Comp. Oehler, *Old Testament Theology*, § 240, and cf. *Job and Solomon*, p. 158.

10b **Practise them.** The divine 'behests' (v. 7) are referred to by an incorrectness like that in cvii. 29b.—**His praise**, i.e. Jehovah's (v. 3b).

PSALM CXII.

- 1 Happy the man that fears Jehovah,
that delights much in his commandments.
- 2 Wealthy in the land shall be his seed;
the generation of the upright shall be blessed.
- 3 Substance and riches are in his house,
and his righteousness abides eternally.
- 4 Unto the upright there beams a light in the darkness,
(unto him who is) pitiful, compassionate, and righteous.
- 5 It is well with the man that shows pity and lends;
he maintains his cause in the judgment.
- 6 For he can never be moved;
the righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance.
- 7 He is not afraid of evil tidings;
stedfast is his heart, trusting in Jehovah.
- 8 Established is his heart, he is not afraid,
until he looks his fill upon his enemies.
- 9 He has scattered abroad, he has given to the poor;
his righteousness abides eternally:
his horn shall be exalted in glory.
- 10 The ungodly sees it and is vexed,
he gnashes with his teeth and melts away;
the desire of the ungodly perishes

2 **Wealthy.** *Gibbōr*, here at least, has a peaceful reference. So Boaz is a 'mighty man of valour' (Ruth ii. 1), i.e. rich; comp. 1 Sam. ix. 1, 2 Kings xv. 20.

3*b* In what sense can these words, originally (cxi. 3) said of Jehovah, be true of the good man? Only in this, that, unlike the ungodly, the good man will be able to 'stand in the judgment' (i. 3); his righteous deeds will stand for ever as a monument of his character. There is no occasion to give the word the sense of outward success (as, e.g., in Isa. liv. 17). Comp. *v.* 9.

4 There are doubts as to the explanation of the second line. Do the epithets refer to Jehovah or to the good man? Before answering, we must ask another question. In an 'alphabetical psalm' must we follow grammar, or may a broken sentence be allowed? If a license is permissible, and so we are left free to follow the suggestions of the context, we must, it seems, interpret the epithets of the good man, and not (as in cxi. 4) of Jehovah. *V.* 5 is manifestly an expansion of *v.* 4, and the 'rising of the light in the darkness' is closely parallel to the promise which in Isa. lviii. 8, 10 is the reward of works of compassion. This view is in accordance with the obvious intention of the writer of these twin psalms. 'We have to expect here, not a repetition, but

a sacred parody' (Hengstenberg), that which is said of Jehovah in the one psalm being affirmed of the righteous man in the other. It is the 'alphabetical' arrangement which has caused the obscurity. But for this, the psalmist would have expressed himself somewhat as in xcvi. 11. Even on the more common theory that Jehovah is referred to in *v.* 3*b*, the verse is not free from difficulty, for a 'dawning light' cannot be said to have moral attributes. In a long allegory such a statement might occur, but in a single distich a poet may be trusted to be consistent.

5 Cf. xxxvii. 21.—**In the judgment**, i.e. not in the divine judgment, but in a human court of justice. Others (e.g. Calvin), 'with rectitude.'

7, 8 Compare the phraseology with Isa. xxvi. 3 (according to R.V. margin), and, for 'steadfastness,' see on li. 12*b*.

9 **His righteousness.** Even here 'righteousness' is not to be weakened into 'beneficence'; other forms of 'righteousness' are tacitly presupposed, though (as in Dan. iv. 24) regarded as less important than active love. See on cxi. 3.—**His horn.** See on lxxv. 5.

10 **Perishes.** See on i. 6, and note the correspondence of Pss. i. and cxii. in the first and last clauses.

PSALM CXIII.

PSALMS cxiii.—cxviii. constitute the so-called 'Hallel,' which was recited at the three great Feasts, at the New Moons, and on the eight days of the Hanukka or Feast of Dedication (cf. the commentators on *ὑμνήσαντες*, Matt. xxvi. 30). Of this group of psalms, Pss. cxiii., cxiv. form the introduction, the former describing the condescension of Israel's God, the latter the wonders of the early history of the people; Pss. cxv.—cxviii., on the other hand, have, as it seems, the historical background of a later period. Linguistically, notice in Ps. cxiii. the unexampled accumulation of archaizing 'construct' forms in :

- 1 Praise, O ye servants of Jehovah
praise the name of Jehovah.
- 2 Blessed be the name of Jehovah
from henceforth even for ever.

- 3 From the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof
worthy to be praised is the name of Jehovah.
- 4 High is Jehovah above all nations,
above the heavens is his glory.
- 5 Who is like unto Jehovah our God,
that is enthroned so high,
- 6 That sees so low down—
in heaven and on earth?
- 7 That raises the helpless out of the dust,
and out of the dunghill lifts the needy,
- 8 To give him a home with princes,
even with the princes of his people ;
- 9 That seats the barren housewife in a home
as the joyful mother of her sons

1 **Servants of Jehovah.** The poet means primarily Israelites, but (see *v.* 3) perhaps contemplates Israel's expansion into a world-wide church. So cxxxv. 1, cf. 20*b* ; and so Isa. lvi. 8, where foreign proselytes are said to 'become Jehovah's servants.'

2, 3 Let time and space be filled with the praise of Jehovah. *V.* 3 reminds us of Mal. i. 11, but there it is open to doubt whether the conversion of the Gentiles is referred to, or whether the prophet takes a large-minded view of the spiritual value of ethnic religions.

4 **Above the heavens.** Comp. on viii. 2*b*, civ. 3.

5, 6 Comp. Isa. lvii. 15, Ps. xviii. 36*b*, cxxxviii. 6. **In heaven and in earth.** Does this describe

the infinite range of the divine vision? Or, comparing Deut. iii. 24, is this line the complement of *v.* 5*a*? Or, does 'in heaven' belong to *v.* 5*b*, and 'on earth' to *v.* 6*a*? The third view is the most probable on account of 'so low' (see Keble's version).

7, 8 These verses define the meaning of 'on earth ;' God's self-humiliation is for the lowly, not for the proud. They are almost a verbal quotation from the Song of Hannah (1 Sam. ii. 8), which is at any rate older than this psalm.

9 **That seats . . . in a home,** the security of the married woman consisting in her having borne children. Again compare Hannah (1 Sam. ii. 5), and, for the phraseology of line 1, lxviii. 7.

PSALM CXIV

- 1 When Israel went forth from Egypt,
the house of Jacob from a barbaric people,
- 2 Judah became his sanctuary,
Israel his dominion.
- 3 ^{when} The sea saw ^{it} and fled,
Jordan turned backward.
- 4 The mountains skipped like rams,
the hills like the young of the flock.

- 7 5-7b
of the Quilting-Vows?
- 5 What ails thee, O thou sea, that thou fleest?
thou Jordan, that thou turnest back?
- 6 Ye mountains, that ye skip like rams?
ye hills, like the young of the flock?
- 7 Be in agony, thou earth, at the presence of the Lord,
at the presence of the God of Jacob;
- 8 Who turns the rock into a pool of water,
flint-stone into a gushing fountain.

1 **Barbaric** (Heb. *lō'ēz*, βαρ-
βαρόφωνος). The word contains a
suggestion of character (cf. Cic.,
Fontei. x. 21, 'immanis ac barbara
consuetudo'). Harshness from one
with whom we can only communi-
cate by signs, seems doubly harsh
(see on Isa. xxviii. 11). Egyptian,
even more than Assyrian (read
lō'ēz in Isa. xxxiii. 19), must have
seemed a 'stammering' or 'bar-
barous' tongue to the Israelites.
In late Hebrew *la'az* is used for
a non-Hebrew vernacular (cf. the
Translator's Preface to A.V.)

2 **Judah . . . Israel.** The
land, or the people? The fem.
verb will suit either. But, to avoid
fourfold mention of the people, we
should prefer the latter view, which
is also rather the more obvious
linguistically.—**His sanctuary**,
the temple being popularly regarded
as in Judah; **his dominion**, Israel

being the national designation.
Both this passage and lxxvi. 2
suggest that the northern tribes
had already been lost, and that
Jerusalem was now in all respects
the centre of Israel. Why '*his*
dominion'? Probably for effect's
sake, the name of the king being
reserved for v. 7. The psalm is
evidently by a skilled artist.

3 The parting of the waters of
the Red Sea and of the Jordan—
the two marvels which marked
respectively the beginning and the
end of Israel's long journey (cf.
Hab. iii. 8). The former is again
connected with the foundation of
the sanctuary in Ex. xv. 13 and
16-17.

4 Cf. xxix. 6, and for the facts
Ex. xix. 18.

8 See Ex. xvii. 6, Num. xx. 11.
What greater proofs of almighty-
ness?

PSALM CXV.

THE battle-song of Sobieski and of Christendom in 1683. It is very
specially a liturgical psalm. *Vv.* 1-8 belong to the congregation; at
v. 9 a change of singers takes place, and possibly 9 *a*, 10 *a*, and 11 *a* may
be intended for one of the Levites, the second part of these verses be-
longing to the whole choir. *Vv.* 12-15 will then be sung by the priest,
and *vv.* 16-18 by the congregation. The Sept. (followed by Theodotion
and the Peshitto) unites this to Ps. cxiv., Ps. cxvi. being divided into two
(see introd.) So also many Heb. MSS. The reason is simply that
Pss. cxiv., cxv. are separated by no Hallelujah. See on. Ps. cxxxv.

- 1 Not unto us, Jehovah, not unto us,
but unto thy name give glory,
for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth's sake.
- 2 Wherefore do the heathen say,
'Where, pray, is their God?'

- 3 Whereas our God is in heaven,
all that he pleaseth he worketh out.
- 4 (But) their idols are silver and gold,
the handiwork of men ;
- 5 Mouths have they, but they speak not ;
eyes have they, but they see not ;
- 6 Ears have they, but they hear not ;
noses have they, but they smell not ;
- 7 As for their hands, they handle not ;
as for their feet, they walk not ;
no sound give they with their throats.
- 8 Like unto them shall their makers become,
and every one that trusts in them.
- 9 O Israel, trust thou in Jehovah ;
he is their help and their shield.
- 10 O house of Aaron, trust ye in Jehovah ;
he is their help and their shield.
- 11 Ye that fear Jehovah, put your trust in Jehovah ;
he is their help and their shield.
- 12 Jehovah has remembered us ; he will bless—
will bless the house of Israel,
will bless the house of Aaron,
- 13 Will bless them that fear Jehovah,
small as well as great.
- 14 Jehovah add to you,
to you and to your children !
- 15 Blessed may ye be of Jehovah,
who made heaven and earth !
- 16 The heavens are heavens for Jehovah,
but the earth has he given to the children of men.
- 17 The dead are not they that praise Jah,
neither all such as have gone down into Silence.
- 18 But *we* will bless Jah,
from henceforth even for ever.

1 Israel is in danger from heathen enemies, and appeals for help. 'We indeed are not fully *khasīdīm* (contrast lxxxvi. 2), and do not deserve our name as thy servants : but thou art most truly *khasīd*, and wilt glorify, not us, but thy covenant-name and promise.' Comp. Deut. vii. 7, 8, Ezek. xxxvi.

22, 23. We need not therefore stumble at the reference to Jehovah's *khesed* in line 2 as inconsistent with line 1. Possibly, however, a line has fallen out before line 3.

3 Jehovah is not only (for his name's sake) willing, but (being 'the God of heaven ;' cf. v. 16) able to help his covenant-people. The

question in *v.* 3*b* (see below)¹ implies the localisation and consequently the limited power of Jehovah. If Israel's God is only the God of Jerusalem, he can of course be paralysed by a superior God. The psalmist answers by anticipation that 'our God' cannot be localised on earth. Heaven is to him doubtless in process of becoming a symbolic expression (cf. cxlviii. 13, 1 Kings viii. 27). *V.* 3*b* recurs in cxxxv. 6*a*.

4-8 A later psalmist copies this piece of caustic humour (cxxxv. 15-18); comp. also Deut. iv. 28, Isa. xlv. 9-20. What can such vain gods do against the Almighty?—**Like unto them, &c.** So II. Isaiah says, 'The fashioners of images are all of them *tōhū*' (impotent, lifeless chaos), Isa. xlv. 9; cf. Jer. ii. 5 (above, on lxii. 11).

9-11 The versions give, 'trust . . . trust.' The imperative rendering, as Street long ago observed, does not agree so well with the latter part of the verses. But the antiphonal character of *vv.* 9-11 accounts for the variation of persons. A threefold division of the faithful, as *vv.* 12, 13, cxviii. 2-4, and (with 'house of Levi' added) cxxxv. 19-20.—**Israel.** Sept. and Pesh. read, 'house of Israel,' har-

monising with *v.* 12; but, as in cxviii. 2, symmetry requires a trisyllable = *beth Akron*.—**House of Aaron.** Singled out as the aristocracy of 'Israel.'—**Ye that fear Jehovah.** St. Jerome renders, 'Timentes Dominum.' Better, 'metuentes'—the word used in Latin inscriptions for proselytes—for proselytes, in a wide sense, are surely included (see my note on Isa. lvi. 5).² The ordinary Greek phrase is *σεβόμενοι τὸν θεόν* (on which see Schürer).—**Help and shield,** as xxxiii. 20.

12 **Has remembered us.** If the psalm was sung during the offering of a sacrifice, this may mean that Jehovah has accepted the sacrifice (Del. compares the use of *azkārāh* for that part of the offering which was to 'remind' God; see on Lev. ii. 2). But the psalmist may mean only that Jehovah has constantly shown his favour to Israel.

16-18 The mention of heaven and earth (*v.* 15) suggests the thought that on earth, and on earth alone, can men enjoy the privilege of praising their God. Sheól is (the land of) **Silence** (xciv. 17); its chief pang will be the loss of personal communion with God (cf. Isa. xxxviii. 18, 19).

PSALM CXVI.

THE tender musings of a devout soul on some personal or rather national deliverance; see Keble's lovely version. The want of continuity reminds us of Ps. cxviii., and the variation in the point of time of Ps. lxxvii. Notice the recurrence of key-phrases (as in Ps. cxviii.) Sept. begins a new psalm at *v.* 10; a new part at any rate begins there.

- 1 I am confident that Jehovah will hear
the voice of my beseeching.
- 2 For he has leaned his ear unto me,
and my calling shall last all my days.

¹ 'Where is thy God?' If he were in Israel (so we may expand the question), we ought to see some signs of his effectual working for his people (comp. xlvi. 13). Is he asleep, or infirm, or on a journey (cf. 1 Kings xviii. 27)?

² So Kuenen; 'Judaism is extending its borders; proselytism has begun' (*Hibbert Lectures*, p. 186).

- 3 Cords of Death had encompassed me,
and straits of Hades had come upon me ;
- 4 I suffered pain of heart and dejection,
and called on the name of Jehovah,
'Ah, Jehovah ! deliver my soul.'
- 5 Full of pity is Jehovah, and righteous,
yea, our God is compassionate.
- 6 Jehovah is the keeper of the simple ;
I was brought low, and he saved me.
- 7 Return unto thy rest, O my soul,
for Jehovah has dealt bountifully with thee.
- 8 For thou hast rescued my soul from death,
mine eye from tears,
my foot from stumbling.
- 9 I shall walk before Jehovah
in the lands of the living.
- 10 I was confident that I should speak (thus) ;
but as for me, I was sore afflicted ;
- 11 I said in mine alarm,
'All men are liars.'
- 12 What can I render unto Jehovah
for all his bounties unto me ?
- 13 I will lift the cup of salvations,
and call upon the name of Jehovah,
- 14 My vows will I pay unto Jehovah,
I would pay them before all his people.
- 15 A grave thing in the sight of Jehovah
is the death of his duteous loving ones.
- 16 Ah, (save me still,) Jehovah ! for I am thy servant,
I am thy servant, the son of thy handmaid ;
* * * thou hast loosed my bonds.
- 17 I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving,
and will call upon the name of Jehovah.
- 18 My vows will I pay unto Jehovah,
I would pay them before all his people,
- 19 In the courts of the house of Jehovah,
in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem.

1, 2 A good resolution, and its ground in experience. For **I am confident**, the text has 'I love' (continue, 'for Jehovah hears'). One would gladly find in the Psalter one such emphatic expression of

love to God, which, as Letronne (after Pascal and De Maistre) has observed, is a specially Hebrew (or at least Semitic) conception ; the Greeks had the name Theophilos but not Philotheos. Love to God

is certainly more suitable in this context than in xviii. 2 (rec. text). But the omission of the object is difficult (? comp. 1 John iv. 19, Lachmann). Accepting the correction, part i. and part ii. both begin in the same manner, which is in the style of our psalmist.

3 Based on xviii. 5, 6. **Straits of Hades** may mean 'distresses no more to be escaped from than Hades (Sheól).' If so, our poet may have given the first **הבלי** in his original in the sense of 'pains' (not 'cords'). But possibly 'straits of Sheól' may be = 'fauces Orci' (see on xxiii. 4), since elsewhere **מַצַּר** is (allegorically) literal; see on cxviii. 5.

9 **I shall walk**, unhurried and free from care (cf. cxix. 45, same stem). Or, 'I can walk.' The poet's present and future are alike free from clouds; it is the inference of faith (cf. cxviii. 17).—**Lands** (instead of 'land,' xxvii. 13) gives the same idea as 'a land of distances' (Isa. xxxiii. 17): it is the plural of extension. Geddes, '(Hence) I yet walk in the regions of the living;' Keble—

In fields of life and light
Speed fearless here and there

(expressing the Hithpaël). How widely the Diaspora spread at an early period, is well known (cf. 'in the lands,' cvi. 27). Ewald remarks the accumulation of plurals in late Hebrew (*Lehrbuch*, § 270c). See, however, crit. note.

10, 11 Connexion and rendering are obscure. In any case, the order of time is broken: what the poet here tells us precedes the deliverance just described. He means, I think, that, in spite of the dark view of human nature expressed in the speech which he will presently quote, he was fully confident that he would sooner or later have to record thanksgivings for deliverance (such as in *vs.* 5-9). But there are other explanations, e.g. (a) 'I kept my hold upon God (even) when I spake, or, had to speak, (saying,) I am sore afflicted.'

Just as Koheleth was regardful of 'wisdom' in the midst of his experiments on 'folly' (Eccles. ii. 3), so the psalmist retained his faith even when God and man seemed to have forsaken him, and when two despairing cries forced themselves from his lips. Or, (b) 'I am full of faith when (thus) I speak (referring to *vs.* 5-9), and yet I (the person who speak thus confidently) have been so afflicted and alarmed that I said,' &c. I prefer (b), because *v.* 10b seems to me parallel in form to *v.* 11a. The view actually adopted, however, has the support of xxvii. 13 (see also above, on *vs.* 1, 2).

11 Line 1 comes from xxxi. 23. **Are liars** (not, 'are a lie,' as lxii. 10), i.e. disappointing expectations. Israel was to owe its deliverance, not to human allies, but to Jehovah (lx. 13). Not the statement (cf. cxviii. 8, 9), but the tone was wrong.

13 The speaker, who will naturally make a thank-offering to Jehovah, looks forward to the happy meal which will follow, and at which, solemnly raising the cup (as in later Jewish festival rites), he will commemorate his rich and abundant deliverance (**salvations**). So on the great stèle of Byblus (Geba) the king is represented standing before the local deity with a cup in his hand. In lines 2 and 3 he says, 'I call upon my lady the Baalath of Geba, because she [hath heard my voice];' Ganneau, *Études d'archéologie orientale*, 1880, p. 12. That a sacrificial meal and not a drink-offering is meant by the psalmist, is suggested by the verb in *v.* 14a (cf. *shélem*).

14 Repeated as *v.* 18 to lengthen the psalm. **My vows will I pay**, &c. Perhaps this psalm was to be sung before a sacrifice.

15 In xlv. 13 Jehovah is said to have rated his people low; here, however, to regard the death of his *khasidim* (see on l. 5) as something **precious**, i.e. dearly to be paid for by those who are its agents. We should have expected 'the blood,

as in lxxii. 14. Might we explain *yāqār* 'weighty,' as cxxxix. 17?

16 God's past kindness emboldens the prayer (to be completed in thought from cxviii. 25) for its continuance. The words of happy self-abasement which follow are suggested by lxxxvi. 16. But what shall we say to the third line as it stands in all parallelistic versions of the received text? Can **thou hast loosed** be, as Ewald takes it, a 'precativ perfect,' and mean 'mayest thou loose'? No; for

even if this were grammatically possible, the context shows that deliverance is past (see *vv.* 7, 8). Nor, for the same reason, can it be a 'prophetic perfect,' in spite of a superficial resemblance to xxii. 22. Rather, the clause serves a double purpose: it furnishes a basis for the petition in lines 1 and 2, and for the grateful resolution in *v.* 17. But surely, as Olshausen and Bickell have seen, something must have fallen out: the clause, as it stands, is scarcely tolerable.

PSALM CXVII.

SOME MSS. attach this doxology to Ps. cxvi.; others prefix it to Ps. cxviii. But why may it not have been prefixed or appended to other liturgical psalms, according to convenience? Comp. *v.* 2*a* with ciii. 11*b*.

- 1 O praise Jehovah, all ye nations,
 laud him, all ye peoples.
- 2 For his lovingkindness is mighty over us,
 and the truth of Jehovah endures for ever.

PSALM CXVIII.

LUTHER'S psalm at the Wartburg, and less appropriately used as a battle-song by the Huguenots. It is really a string of pearls, each verse being independent like a proverb. The historical background is more definite than in Ps. cxvi. Some happy event has taken place, which is celebrated by festival rites, not unlike (see on *v.* 27) those of the Feast of Booths. A procession is on its way to the temple, different sections of which alternately sing the several verses of the first part (*vv.* 1-18). Verse 19 is spoken in the name of the whole band on its arrival at the gates; *v.* 20 is the reply in the name of the Levites who receive it. Verses 21-24 are sung antiphonally as before; *v.* 25 is the cry of the whole chorus; *v.* 26 is spoken by those within to the approaching procession; *v.* 27 belongs to the leaders of the band; *v.* 28 to a part of the chorus; *v.* 29 to the whole body of worshippers.

- 1 O thank ye Jehovah, for he is good,
 for his lovingkindness endures for ever.
- 2 O let Israel say
 that his lovingkindness endures for ever.
- 3 O let the house of Aaron say
 that his lovingkindness endures for ever.
- 4 O let them that fear Jehovah say
 that his lovingkindness endures for ever.
- 5 From out of my straits I called upon Jah;
 Jah answered me in a broad place.

- 6 Jehovah is on my side ; I will not fear ;
what can man do unto me ?
- 7 Jehovah is on my side, as my great helper,
therefore I shall look my fill upon them that hate me.
- 8 It is better to take refuge in Jehovah
than to put any confidence in man.
- 9 It is better to take refuge in Jehovah
than to put any confidence in princes.
- 10 All nations have come about me,
in Jehovah's name will I mow them down.
- 11 They have come about me, yea, they have come about me,
in Jehovah's name will I mow them down.
- 12 They have come about me as bees about wax,
they flame like a fire of thorns,
in Jehovah's name will I mow them down.
- 13 Thou didst thrust sore at me that I might fall,
but Jehovah helped me.
- 14 Jah is my strength and my song,
therefore he became my salvation.
- 15 The sound of a ringing shout of salvation
is in the tents of the righteous ;
'The right hand of Jehovah does valiantly :
- 16 The right hand of Jehovah is exalted,
the right hand of Jehovah does valiantly.'
- 17 I shall not die but live,
and tell out the works of Jehovah.
- 18 Jehovah has chastened me indeed,
but he has not given over unto death.
- 19 Open to me the gates of righteousness,
that I may enter into them, and give thanks unto Jah.
- 20 This is the gate of Jehovah,
the righteous may enter into it.
- 21 I will give thanks unto thee, for thou didst answer me,
and become my salvation.
- 22 The stone which the builders rejected
is become the chief corner stone.
- 23 This was by Jehovah's appointing,
wondrous is it in our eyes.
- 24 This is the day which Jehovah has made,
let us exult and rejoice in it.
- 25 Ah, Jehovah ! save (still) ;
Ah, Jehovah ! send prosperity (still).

- 26 Blessed be he that enters in the name of Jehovah,
we bless you from the house of Jehovah.
- 27 Jehovah is God ; light has he given us ;
bind the procession with branches,
(step on) to the altar-horns.
- 28 Thou art my God, and I will thank thee,
my God, I will exalt thee.
- 29 O give thanks unto Jehovah, for he is good,
for his lovingkindness endures for ever.

1-4 Comp. this prelude with Ezra iii. 10, 11, cvii. 2, cxxxvi. 1, cxv. 9-11.

5 **My straits** (lit., the strait place). Cf. Lam. i. 3, 'All her pursuers overtook her between the straits.' See same allegory, cxvi. 3.—**In a broad place**, i.e. by setting me at ease (cf. xviii. 20, xxxi. 9).

6, 7 At this point the speaker transfers his point of view into the past ; he is once more fearless in the midst of foes. This continues till v. 13. Notice in v. 6 a verbal quotation from lvi. 10, 12, and in v. 7 an allusion to liv. 6 (note).

8, 9 See cxvi. 11, cxlvi. 3, and comp. these lines from an oracle said to have been given to Esarhaddon (Budge, *History of Esarhaddon*, pp. 3, 4), 'Upon mankind trust not, (but) bend thine eyes upon me—trust to me ; for I am Istar of Arbela,' and these from an Egyptian hymn to Amen the sun-god (*Records of the Past*, vi. 99).

Let no prince be my defender in all my troubles :

Let not my memorial be placed under the power

Of any man who is in the house . . .
my Lord is (my) defender.

10 The speaker is still absorbed in the past. His battle-cry is, **I will mow them down**. Sept. wilfully, ἡμνάμην αὐτοῦς (suggested by the 'bees'). Hengstenberg, in strict accordance with usage, 'I will circumcise them' (as Charlemagne baptised the Saxons ; cf. Jos. *Ant.* xiii. 9, 1 ; 11, 3 ; or, in the vindictive manner of David, 1 Sam. xviii. 25). One might also suggest, 'I

will weaken them, or make them harmless, I will (as in the Indian figure) mix their blood with water' (cf. the use of *māhal*, Isa. i. 22). But 'mow them down' is simpler and stronger (cf. *mālal*, Job xxiv. 24 Nifal) ; cf. similar bold expressions in Judg. xv. 8, 1 Sam. xv. 33.

12 See crit. note. On the second figure, comp. 2 Sam. xxiii. 6, 7.

13-16 Here the point of time is shifted to the deliverance. V. 14 is an appropriate quotation from Ex. xv. 2 (cf. Isa. xii. 2).

19 **The gates of righteousness**, i.e. (1) the gates which open only to the righteous (v. 20 *b* ; cf. Isa. xxvi. 2), and (2) those from which Jehovah's righteous acts of deliverance proceed (v. 19 *b* ; cf. Jer. xxxi. 23). To enter God's house is in itself a proof of righteousness (v. 6, 8 ; cf. 2 Sam. xv. 25).

22 An old proverb in a new light. The **stone** means Israel, which, contrary to all human probability, had again become prominent in the complex organisation of peoples. The **builders** are non-Israelites who would fain have arranged the world to their liking.

25 Sung, perhaps, by the procession carrying and shaking festal branches, the use of which was not confined to the Feast of Booths (1 Macc. xiii. 51, 2 Macc. x. 6 ; cf. Madden, *Coins of the Jews*, pp. 71, 73, 203, 239). See below.—**Save (still)**. So Jer. xxxi. 7. Again and again tears mingled with Israel's laughter (Ezra iii. 12, 13), so incomplete seemed the fulfilment of the promises ; see, e.g., lxxxv. 5, cxxvi. 4, Isa. xxvi. 18 (contrast 1-7,

15). The pleading 'Hosanna' in time acquired the character of an eucharistic formula, accommodating itself to the joyousness of the festival (see Matt. xxi. 9, and cf. Dante, *Purg.* xxix. 20, 31). The next verse indeed is already eucharistic (same transition as in cxvi. 16, 17).

26 **In the name of Jehovah.** These words go with 'Blessed' (cf. Deut. xxi. 5); so the accentuation.

27 **Bind the procession, &c.** The passage is difficult, but so much is clear that it must be explained by the rites of the Feast of Booths. For 'procession' (*khag*) we might substitute 'festal victim' (see Ex. xxiii. 18, Mal. ii. 3), or perhaps (a secondary meaning theoretically as defensible) 'festal staves' (*thyrsi*). Neither rendering, however, seems to me perfectly suitable to the context. On the other hand, it is certain that a solemn procession round the altar (cf. xxvi. 6 and xxvii. 6 Sept.) was one of the most characteristic usages of the Feast of Booths. Western parallels to such a custom will at once suggest themselves (e.g. Thucyd. iv. 80, Liv. xxvi. 9, Virg. *Æn.* viii. 285); nor is there any want of Semitic illustrations. Thus the Arabic poet Labîd alludes to the dance of maidens round Duwâr¹ (from *dâra* 'to go round'; cf. ڨڨڨ)—a custom of the 'days of the ignorance'—and the Tawâf or circum-ambulation of the Kaaba was too deeply rooted to be touched even by Mohammed.² The Targum on Cant. iii. 2 may give a strange exegesis, but supplies a valuable confirmation of what we know well from other sources. Philo, too, evidently regards the custom of sacred dances as Semitic, for he twice refers to it

in connexion with the Israelites in the wilderness. A similar joyous procession (not a dance) is referred to here. The welcome in v. 26 is followed by a summons to the members of the chorus to **bind** themselves with **branches** (see below). Then, with a quick, imperious gesture, the same speakers point to the **altar-horns** (i.e. the corners with their horn-like projections) as the points round which the procession is to move. The 'horns' were the symbols, not only of strength (Deut. xxxiii. 17) and dignity (lxxv. 5) in general, but of divine strength and divine dignity (the bull was a divine symbol with the Egyptians, Phœnicians, and Assyrians³). To touch or to move round them was to make a direct appeal for divine help, as is clear from 1 Kings i. 50, ii. 28, and (to illustrate one popular usage by another) Plutarch's life of Theseus, ἐχόρευσε περὶ τὸν κερατῶνα βωμόν. The context of the latter passage shows that the efficacy of the dance was connected with the (numerous) horns of the altar. The great Jewish altar had indeed but four horns (Ex. xxvii. 2), but these were invested with profound sanctity. Hence the strongly Jewish author of the Book of Judith (ix. 8) says that the Assyrians presumed 'to overthrow with the axe the horn of God's altar.'⁴

Now to return to the 'branches,' which the Septuagint and Symmachus have already found here. The former, it is true, may have explained them of the leafy booths of the σκηνοπηγία. It is certain, however, that 'the fruit of goodly trees, branches of palm-trees, and boughs of branching trees, and willows of the stream' (Lev. xxiii. 40) were, in the later

¹ So Lyall (*Specimens*, p. 125); Duwâr or Dawâr, however, is surely not 'the Pillar,' but 'that which devotees encircle.' Cf. Antara's poem in Freytag's *Hamdasa*, p. 209, v. 1; and see further Lane's *Lexicon*.

² Krehl, *Religion der vorislamischen Araber*, p. 63, &c.; Grünbaum, *Zeitschr. d. deutschen morg. Gesellschaft*, 1886, pp. 276, 277.

³ See my note on Isa. i. 24, and cf. Euseb. *Prep. Ev.* i. 10 (p. 38, ed. 1688); Sayce, *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 290.

⁴ For facts bearing on this subject, see Spencer, *De Legibus Hebraeorum*, lib. iii. c. 4 and lib. iv. c. 5, 8; Bötticher, *Der Baumkultus der Hellenen*, chaps. 27, 28; and Grünbaum's article in the *Z. D. M. G.*

period, not plucked merely to make booths, but also for ritual purposes.¹ We need not consult a more recent authority than Josephus,² who expressly speaks of *thyrsi* as carried in the hands (cf. 2 Macc. x. 7). Plutarch (*Sympos.* iv. 6, 2), with one of his hasty combinations, conjectures that this *θυρσοφορία* was accompanied by *Bacchic* dances. What the ancient popular rites of the great autumn festival were, we can hardly be said to know, but processions of priests moving round the altar with a measured step did take place at the Feast of Booths in the later period. Once on the first six days of the festival, and seven times on the seventh day, this solemn circuit was made, the priests repeating meanwhile the 25th verse of our psalm;³ and Jewish worshippers even now bear witness in the words of their liturgy that they 'with songs of praise wave the palm-branch seven days, a memorial of the sanctuary observed outside it on the Feast of Booths.'⁴ It is surely much more natural to find such a procession (but not of priests) referred to in our passage than an elliptically expressed description of a sacrifice (Perowne, 'Bind the victim with cords till it is sacrificed, and its blood sprinkled on the horns of the altar'). We may also reasonably suppose that the favourite rite of shaking or

waving the branches towards the altar in token of supplication was practised on this occasion.⁵ If so, the shaking probably took place between the singing of *v.* 24 and *v.* 25.

But this is not all; the branches are now to be put to another use—that of 'binding,' i.e. perhaps linking, the members of the procession together before they leave the temple. How this was done is matter for conjecture (cf. Grünbaum's article, referred to already). But at any rate we can hardly avoid interpreting עֲבָתִים of the branches prescribed in Lev. xxiii. 40 (where notice the phrase עֲבָתָהּ). No doubt there was another rite in which these branches were used at the Feast of Booths. Every morning fresh willow-branches were stuck on either side of the altar, apparently to decorate it, and Symmachus seems to explain our passage of this rite, for he renders, ἀνάψατε στεφανώματα καὶ κλάδους. So too does Dr. Grätz, rendering the line—

Bind ye garlands with myrtles;

but, apart from the difficulty of justifying 'garlands,' would not such a decoration of the altar have been completed before the procession set forth?—**To the altar-horns**, i.e. from one horn to another (see above).

PSALM CXIX.

A SWEETLY monotonous meditation, in which, partly to assist the memory, and partly as one of love's quaint ways of expressing itself, the eight lines of each stanza begin with the same letter of the Hebrew alphabet (cf. Lam. iii.) The subject is the duty and blessedness of the study

¹ Dillmann explains Lev. *l.c.*, with reference to *v.* 42, of the making of booths; Kalisch of the special ritual purpose (*θυρσοφορία*).

² Jos. *Ant.* xiii. 13, 6, νόμου ὄντος παρὰ τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις ἐν τῇ Σκηνοπηγίᾳ ἔχειν ἕκαστον θύρσους ἐκ φοινίκων; cf. iii. 10, 4, φέροντες ἐν ταῖς χερσίν εἰρεσιῶνην μυρσίνην καὶ ἰτέας σὺν κρᾶθι φοίνικος πεποιημένην.

³ See Talm. Bab., *Succa*, 45 a.

⁴ *Festival Prayers*, ed. de Sola, vi. 20.

⁵ Grätz's theory that the shaking of the willow-branches (on the seventh day of the feast) had a magical import, was of Babylonian origin, and was not practised within the temple (see his *Monatschrift*, 1887, pp. 509-21), need not be here discussed. Comp. his statements with Herzfeld's (*Geschichte*, iii. 178). The magical theory (see *Succa*, 37 b) may have been superimposed upon the more innocent earlier ones.

of the Law. One can understand the delight which a Christian like Pascal took in this psalm. There may be little variety in the ideas, but there is much in the expression, and in the grouping of the familiar phrases. Nor are the verses always unconnected, if we will spend a little thought upon them (see, e.g., stanzas 12 and 13, Lamed and Mem). Can we reconstruct the outer life of the author? May we take all his expressions autobiographically *au pied de la lettre*? If so, he has a rich and manifold experience—mostly a sad one—behind him; persecution and captivity have long been his portion, but he trusts in the salvation of Jehovah, and looks forward to witnessing for his God before kings. And yet, though as a rule his language is that of an old man, he speaks in some verses (*vv.* 9, 100, 141) as if he were but a youth; how is this? The answer is, that he is not thinking of himself at all, but sometimes of Israel (of which exile and imprisonment are often enough elsewhere said to be the lot) sometimes of the individuals of different ages and spiritual attainments who may use his works. Doubtless he sympathises with each of his disciples, but only in that which is common to many, and not in that which is peculiar to a few. He would fain propagate his own type of character, which is that of a spiritually-minded student of the Law, in the broader sense of the word, according to which the Torah strictly so called is a little Bible, and the Bible an expanded Torah (see on i. 2).

ALEF.

- 1 Happy those that are blameless in walk, that walk in the law of Jehovah!
- 2 Happy those that keep his testimonies, that seek him with their whole heart,
- 3 That also have not worked iniquity, but walked in his ways!
- 4 Thou hast appointed thy behests to be observed exceedingly.
- 5 Ah, may my ways be directed to the observing of thy statutes!
- 6 Then shall I not be ashamed, whilst I look unto all thy commandments.
- 7 I will thank thee with an unfeigned heart when I learn thy righteous ordinances.
- 8 Thy decrees will I observe; O forsake me not utterly!

BETH.

- 9 Wherewith shall a young man cleanse his path, to keep himself after thy word?
- 10 With my whole heart have I enquired after thee; let me not wander from thy commandments.
- 11 Thy saying have I treasured within my heart, that I should not sin against thee.
- 12 Blessed art thou, Jehovah; teach me thy decrees
- 13 With my lips have I rehearsed all the ordinances of thy mouth.
- 14 In the way of thy testimonies I have as great a joy as in all manner of riches.
- 15 I will muse upon thy behests, and look towards thy paths.
- 16 I will solace myself with thy statutes; I will not forget thy word.

GIMEL.

- 17 Deal bountifully with thy servant that I may live ; so will I heed thy word.
- 18 Uncover mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.
- 19 A sojourner am I upon earth ; hide not thou thy commandments from me.
- 20 Crushed is my soul with longing for thine ordinances at all times.
- 21 Thou hast rebuked the proud, who wander from thy commandments.
- 22 Roll away from me insult and contempt, for thy testimonies have I kept.
- 23 Yea, princes sit and speak against me ; thy servant muses upon thy statutes.
- 24 Yea, thy testimonies are my solace, and my counsellors.

DALETH.

- 25 My soul cleaves unto the dust ; revive me according to thy word.
- 26 I have rehearsed my ways, and thou hast answered me ; teach me thy statutes.
- 27 Make me to understand the way of thy behests, so will I muse on thy wondrous works.
- 28 My soul weeps itself away for sorrow ; establish thou me according to thy word !
- 29 Remove from me the way of falseness, and grant me thy law graciously.
- 30 The way of faithfulness have I chosen ; thine ordinances have I set (before me).
- 31 I cleave unto thy testimonies ; Jehovah, make me not ashamed.
- 32 I will run the way of thy commandments, for thou dost enlarge my heart.

HE.

- 33 Point out to me, Jehovah, the way of thy statutes, and I will keep it to the last.
- 34 Give me understanding, and I will keep thy law ; yea, I will observe it with my whole heart.
- 35 Direct me in the track of thy commandments, for therein do I delight.
- 36 Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not unto unjust gain.
- 37 Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity ; revive me in thy ways.
- 38 Ratify unto thy servant thy promise, which leads to thy fear.

- 39 Turn away my reproach which I dread, for thine ordinances are good.
 40 Behold, I long after thy behests : revive me in thy righteousness.

VAU.

- 41 And let thy lovingkindnesses come unto me, Jehovah, even thy salvation, according unto thy promise ;
 42 So shall I have an answer for him that insults ; for my trust is in thy word.
 43 And snatch not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth, for I have waited on for thine ordinances ;
 44 So would I keep thy law continually for ever and ever,
 45 And would walk at large, for I study thy behests,
 46 And would speak of thy testimonies before kings, and not be ashamed.
 47 Yea, I will solace myself with thy commandments, which I love,
 48 And will lift up my hands unto thy commandments, and muse upon thy statutes.

ZAIN.

- 49 Remember (thy) word unto thy servant, seeing that thou hast caused me to hope.
 50 This is my comfort in my affliction, that thy promise has given me life.
 51 The proud have mocked me exceedingly ; I have not declined from thy law.
 52 I have remembered thine ordinances which are of old, Jehovah, and have received comfort.
 53 A fever-glow has seized upon me because of the ungodly that forsake thy law.
 54 Thy statutes have been to me for melodies in the house of my sojourning.
 55 I have remembered thy name in the night, Jehovah, and have observed thy law.
 56 This good has been mine, that I have kept thy behests.

KHETH.

- 57 My portion art thou, Jehovah ; I have resolved to heed thy words.
 58 I entreated thy favour with my whole heart ; have pity upon me, according to thy promise.
 59 I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies.
 60 I made haste and delayed not to keep thy commandments.
 61 The cords of the ungodly have wound about me ; I have not forgotten thy law.

- 62 At midnight I arise to give thanks unto thee because of thy righteous ordinances.
- 63 I am a companion of all them that fear thee and of those that observe thy behests.
- 64 Of thy lovingkindness, Jehovah, the earth is full ; teach me thy statutes.

TETH.

- 65 Thou hast dealt graciously with thy servant, O Jehovah, according unto thy word.
- 66 Train me to rightness of judgment and perception, for I have believed thy commandments.
- 67 Before I was afflicted, I went astray, but now have I heeded thy sayings.
- 68 Thou art good, and doest good ; teach me thy statutes.
- 69 The proud have forged a lie against me ; I with my whole heart will keep thy behests.
- 70 Their heart is as gross as fat ; I have solaced myself with thy law.
- 71 It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes.
- 72 The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver.

YOD.

- 73 Thy hands made me and fashioned me ; give me understanding that I may learn thy commandments.
- 74 Let those that fear thee be glad when they see me, because I have waited on for thy word.
- 75 I know, Jehovah, that thy judgments are righteous, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me.
- 76 O let thy lovingkindness come forth to comfort me, according to thy promise unto thy servant.
- 77 Let thy compassions come unto me that I may live, for thy law is my solace.
- 78 Let the proud be ashamed, for they have lyingly distorted me ; as for me, I will muse upon thy behests.
- 79 Let those that fear thee turn unto me, and they that know thy testimonies.
- 80 Let my heart be sound in thy statutes, that I be not ashamed.

CAF.

- 81 My soul pines for thy salvation ; I have waited on for thy word.
- 82 Mine eyes pine for thy promise, saying, When wilt thou comfort me ?

- 83 For I am become as a wine-skin in the smoke ; thy testimonies do I not forget.
- 84 How many are the days of thy servant ; when wilt thou execute judgment on them that persecute me ?
- 85 The proud have digged pitfalls for me, they that are not after thy law.
- 86 All thy commandments are faithfulness ; they persecute me lyingly ; give me thy help.
- 87 They had almost made an end of me in the land, but I forsook not thy behests.
- 88 Revive me after thy lovingkindness, so shall I observe the testimony of thy mouth.

LAMED.

- 89 Eternally, Jehovah, thy word is fixed in heaven.
- 90 Age upon age thy faithfulness endures ; thou didst settle the earth, and it stood.
- 91 They stand this day according to thine ordinances, for all creatures are thy servants.
- 92 Unless thy law had been my solace, I should then have perished in mine affliction.
- 93 I will never forget thy behests, for with them thou hast given me life.
- 94 I am thine, O save me, for I have studied thy behests.
- 95 The ungodly have waited for me to destroy me ; I will give close heed to thy testimonies.
- 96 To all perfection I have seen a limit ; thy commandment is exceeding broad.

MEM.

- 97 O how I love thy law ! it is my meditation all the day.
- 98 Thy commandments make me wiser than mine enemies, for they are mine for ever.
- 99 I am prudent above all my teachers, for thy testimonies are a meditation unto me.
- 100 I have more understanding than the aged, for I keep thy behests.
- 101 I have withheld my feet from every evil path, that I may heed thy word.
- 102 From thine ordinances have I not departed, for thou thyself hast instructed me.
- 103 How smooth are thy sayings unto my palate ! yea, more than honey to my mouth.
- 104 Through thy behests I get understanding ; therefore do I hate every false path.

NUN.

- 105 Thy word is a lamp unto my foot, and a light unto my track.
 106 I have sworn, and have made it good, to observe thy righteous ordinances.
 107 Very sore am I afflicted, Jehovah ; revive thou me, according to thy word.
 108 The freewill offerings of my mouth do thou accept, Jehovah, and teach me thine ordinances.
 109 My soul is in my hand continually, but I do not forget thy law.
 110 The ungodly have laid a snare for me, but I have not gone astray from thy behests.
 111 Thy testimonies have I claimed as my heritage for ever, for they are the very joy of my heart.
 112 I have inclined my heart to perform thy statutes, for ever, even to the last.

SAMECH.

- 113 I hate the double-minded, but thy law do I love.
 114 Thou art my covert and my shield ; I wait on for thy word.
 115 Avaunt, ye evil-doers ; I would keep the commandments of my God.
 116 Sustain me, according to thy promise, that I may live, and let me not be ashamed of my hope.
 117 Hold thou me up, and I shall be saved ; so will I have regard unto thy statutes continually.
 118 Thou makest light of all them that wander from thy statutes, for their self-deceit is but a lie.
 119 All the ungodly of the earth I account as dross ; therefore I love thy testimonies.
 120 My flesh shudders for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments.

AIN.

- 121 I have practised justice and righteousness ; thou wilt not leave me to mine oppressors.
 122 Be surety for thy servant for good ; let not the proud oppress me.
 123 Mine eyes pine for thy salvation and for thy righteous promise.
 124 Deal with thy servant according to thy lovingkindness, and teach me thy statutes.
 125 I am thy servant ; give me understanding, that I may know thy testimonies.
 126 It is time for Jehovah to do valiantly ; they have made void thy law.

- 127 Therefore do I love thy commandments above gold, yea, above fine gold.
 128 Therefore I guide myself by all thy behests ; every false way do I hate.

PE.

- 129 Marvellous are thy testimonies, therefore has my soul kept them.
 130 The opening of thy words gives light ; it gives understanding to the simple.
 131 I rent wide my mouth and panted, for I longed after thy commandments.
 132 Turn towards me and have pity upon me, as is just unto those that love thy name.
 133 Establish my steps by thy sayings, and let not aught of wickedness tyrannise over me.
 134 Set me free from the oppression of man, so will I observe thy behests.
 135 Make thy face to shine upon thy servant, and teach me thy statutes.
 136 Mine eyes run down with rills of water, because men keep not thy law.

SADE.

- 137 Righteous art thou, Jehovah, and straight are thine ordinances.
 138 In righteousness hast thou appointed thy testimonies and in exceeding faithfulness.
 139 My zeal hath even extinguished me, because my foes have forgotten thy words.
 140 Thy promise is well tried in the fire, and thy servant loveth it.
 141 Young am I and despised ; thy behests do I not forget.
 142 Thy righteousness is right for ever, and thy law is truth.
 143 Distress and anguish have come upon me ; thy commandments are my solace.
 144 Thy testimonies are right for ever ; give me understanding that I may live.

KOF.

- 145 I have called with my whole heart, answer me ; thy statutes Jehovah, would I keep.
 146 I have called unto thee, save me ; so will I observe thy testimonies.
 147 I forestalled the daylight and cried for help ; I have waited on for thy word.
 148 Mine eyes outgo the night watches, that I may muse upon thy sayings.

- 149 Hearken to my voice after thy lovingkindness ; revive me,
Jehovah, according to thine ordinances.
- 150 They draw near that pursue deeds of malice, that have gone far
from thy law.
- 151 Thou, Jehovah, art near, and all thy commandments are truth.
- 152 Long since have I known from thy testimonies that thou hast
founded them for all time.

RESH.

- 153 Behold my affliction and rescue me, for I do not forget thy law.
- 154 Plead thou my cause and release me ; revive me according to
thy promise.
- 155 Far is salvation from the ungodly, for they enquire not after thy
statutes.
- 156 Thy compassions are many, Jehovah ; revive me according to
thine ordinances.
- 157 Many are my persecutors and my foes ; I have not declined
from thy testimonies.
- 158 I beheld the faithless, and had loathing, because they heeded
not thy sayings.
- 159 Behold how I love thy behests ; revive me, Jehovah, according
to thy lovingkindness.
- 160 The sum of thy word is truth, and each of thy righteous ordi-
nances is everlasting.

SHIN.

- 161 Princes have persecuted me without a cause, but my heart throbs
at thy word.
- 162 I spring up for joy at thy saying as one that has gotten great
spoil.
- 163 I hate and abhor lying ; thy law do I love.
- 164 Seven times a day do I praise thee because of thy righteous ordi-
nances.
- 165 Great peace have they that love thy law, and they have no stone
of stumbling.
- 166 I have hoped for thy salvation, Jehovah, and thy commandment
have I done,
- 167 My soul has heeded thy testimonies ; yea, I have loved them
exceedingly.
- 168 I have heeded thy behests and thy testimonies, for all my ways
are before thee.

TAU.

- 169 Let my piercing cry come near before thee, Jehovah ; give me
understanding, according to thy word.

- 170 Let my supplication come before thee ; deliver me, according to thy promise.
- 171 My lips are a wellspring of praise that thou teachest me thy statutes.
- 172 Let my tongue bear record of thy sayings, that all thy commandments are righteousness.
- 173 Let thine hand come forth to help me, for thy behests have I chosen.
- 174 I long, Jehovah, for thy salvation, and thy law is my solace.
- 175 Let my soul but live, and it shall praise thee, and let thine ordinances help me.
- 176 I wander like a lost sheep ; seek thy servant, for I do not forget thy commandments.

21 **The proud.** 'Boiling' or 'boiling over' suggested the idea of pride (see Gen. xlix. 4, R.V. marg.) The word occurs six times in this psalm. Whether it refers to Jews (as Jer. xliii. 2, Mal. iii. 14) or to foreigners (as Isa. xiii. 11), or to both, the context must decide. At any rate, opponents of the strict worship of Jehovah are meant—those who calumniate (*vv.* 69, 78) and (*v.* 122) oppress the speaker, and both transgress and mock at God's law. (*vv.* 21, 51, 85). Some of the expressions used point especially to apostate Jews. But cf. on xix. 14. After 'the proud' the text has 'accursed,' which equally spoils the structure of the distich, to which-ever line (see R.V.) we attach it. Cf. *vv.* 1, 53.

22 **Roll away.** Shame is viewed as a burden ; cf. lxix. 8, 10, Mic. vi. 16, &c. The points, however, suggest the rendering 'Uncover' (shame is a cloak, as xxxv. 26). Less naturally.

25 **My soul cleaves . . . revive me.** Comp. similar expressions of the *nation*, xliv. 26, lxxi. 20, lxxxv. 7.

30 **Have I set.** A condensed quotation from xvi. 8 *a*.

36 **Not unto unjust gain.** Cf. Isa. lvii. 17 (said of Israel).

43 **The word of truth,** i.e. of testimony for the truth ; cf. *vv.* 42, 46.

46 **Before kings,** in whose

dominions the dispersed Jews were settled. Cf. Eccclus. xxxix. 4.

75 **Thy judgments,** viz. those of providence (as Del.) ; not 'thine ordinances' (xix. 10), though comp. Kautzsch's Tract on the stem עָדַק, pp. 14, 33).

79 **And they that know.** So Heb. marg. (cf. *v.* 63). The text has, 'and let them know' (cf. *v.* 125, Heb.)

83 **A wine-skin in the smoke,** i.e. dried up and wrinkled, unused and seemingly useless (an appropriate figure for exiled Israel).

84 **How many, &c.** He means, 'how few of my days are left' ! Cf. lxxxix. 48 and on cii. 13.

89 **Thy word,** i.e. not merely the word by which thou didst create the world (Kimchi), but that by which thou didst found Israel and decree its wondrous history. Cf. lxxxix. 3.

92 **Unless thy law, &c.** The 'solace' which the psalmist derives from the Law contains within itself the promise of continued life (one might almost say, of eternal life ; cf. Ibn Ezra).

96 **To all perfection, &c.** All earthly perfection is limited ; but God's Law, which is heavenly and eternal (*v.* 89), is of measureless range. It is the ideal realised. Would it be this if Israel, whose chief good it is, could be destroyed ? See *v.* 95.

113 **The double-minded,** i.e.

the undecided in religion (cf. Hos. x. 2, 1 Kings xviii. 21, Ecclus. ii. 12); or, as one might say, the 'doubters' (cf. xciv. 19, R.V. marg.) Kay, 'sceptical thoughts.'

119 **I account.** So Sept.; Aquila, Symmachus, and Jerome, 'thou accountest.' The text has, 'Thou makest to cease'—an unsuitable word.

128 **I guide myself, &c.** So Street renders (after Sept.) See crit. note.

130 **The opening,** i.e. the unfolding (as De Witt).

132 **As is just,** taking *mishpāt* in the sense of 'rule.' Cf. John i. 12, 1 John i. 9, R.V.

152 **For all time.** A variation upon the usual rendering 'for ever,' to bring out the meaning. The reference is not to the *ἄγραφοι νόμοι*, but to the Law (i.e. the Greater and the Lesser Bible), which has no merely temporary validity, because 'the changing circumstances of the human race cannot destroy the

significance and worth of any institutions or facts which reveal the life of God' (Dale, *The Ten Commandments*, p. 5).

161 **Princes, &c.** Here again the psalmist evidently speaks for the nation.—**Throbs**, either from fear (as usually, e.g. xxvii. 1) or from delight (as Jer. xxxiii. 9), or from both together (see on Isa. lx. 5).

162 **Thy saying** need not here have the special meaning 'thy promise' (as *vv.* 58, 76, &c.); in *v.* 11 it is clearly a synonym for 'thy word,' i.e. the Scriptures as a whole. Each 'wondrous thing' the psalmist finds in the Law (*v.* 18) makes him 'spring for joy' (cf. Keble).

164 **Seven times,** i.e. constantly (improving upon lv. 18). Cf. Prov. xxiv. 16.

176 **Like a lost sheep.** Not here in a spiritual sense, but as a figure of the dispersion of Israel (see Jer. l. 6, 17; cf. Isa. xxvii. 13, Zech. xi. 16).

PSALM CXX.

TH**EME**—pious resignation under the almost intolerable miseries of heathen rule. The key to the special circumstances is lost. How numerous were the disappointments which followed the crowning mercy of the Restoration!

- 1 Unto Jehovah in my straitness
I called, and he answered me.
- 2 Jehovah, deliver my soul from the lying lip,
from the deceitful tongue.
- 3 What shall he give unto thee, and what more give unto thee,
O deceitful tongue?
- 4 Arrows of a warrior, well-sharpened ones,
moreover glowing coals of broom.
- 5 Woe is me that I sojourn in Meshech,
that I dwell beside the tents of Kedar!
- 6 All too long my soul has had her dwelling
beside one that hates peace.
- 7 I am all peace, but if I speak,
they are bent on war.

3 The poet suffers either from calumny or from treachery (cf. cxix. 69), and imprecates the divine vengeance. He imagines the

tongue endowed with will (cf. lii. 6? Prov. x. 31, Zeph. iii. 13, Mic. vi. 12). Illustrate the idiom in *l. 1* by *1 Sam. iii. 17* ('God do so,' &c.). Others render, 'What can the false tongue give thee, and what more give thee?' So Hupfeld and Riehm, taking the false tongue to mean a flattering but unfriendly neighbour, and the question to be rhetorically addressed to an imaginary person.

4 The wrath of Jehovah is described in figures borrowed from nomad life (cf. xviii. 15, xi. 6, cxl. 11); or (on Hupfeld's theory of *v. 3*) the fatal consequences to be apprehended from the false-hearted neighbour (whose words are compared, says Riehm, first to arrows, then to hot coals; cf. Prov. xxvi. 21, James iii. 6, 7).—**Coals of broom** (Heb. *rôthem* = Ar. *ratama*). The

Bedawins of Sinai still burn this very plant into a charcoal which throws out the most intense heat (Burckhardt; Palmer). Cf. Job xxx. 4, *1 Kings* xix. 4, 5 (a modern Elijah would enjoy the sight and perfume of its pink blossoms).

5 **Meshech** (tribes between the Black and the Caspian Sea) and **Kedar** (the nomad tribes of North Arabia) either represent the inhospitable regions in which many of the Jews were dispersed, or symbolise the malignant neighbours of the Jews at home. The former name = the Assyrian *Muški*, which was the northern limit of the empire of Sargon.

6 **All too long**, &c. The psalmist endures, but he is tired with the effort (cf. cxxiii. 3, 4).

7 **If I speak**, i.e. peaceably (cf. xxviii. 3, xxxv. 20).

PSALM CXXI.

IT is the poet's sweet faith that help comes when it is wanted, and that 'o'er the mountain walls young angels pass.' Presently he hears in his heart 'a voice which, though it be his own, is charged with a message from some one else than himself.' With *vv. 3-8* comp. *xc. 3-13*. Most probably a pilgrim-song. Notice the 'fugue-like' parallelism. A passage in Kingsley's *Life* (abridged edition, i. 10) gives a fresh charm to the psalm.

- 1 I will lift up mine eyes unto the mountains :
whence will my help come ?
- 2 My help comes from beside Jehovah,
who made the heaven and the earth.
- 3 He cannot suffer thy foot to waver,
he that keeps thee cannot slumber.
- 4 Behold, he that keeps Israel
can neither slumber nor sleep.
- 5 Jehovah is he that keeps thee,
Jehovah thy shelter upon thy right hand.
- 6 The sun shall not smite thee by day,
nor the moon by night.
- 7 Jehovah shall keep thee from all evil ;
he shall keep thy soul.
- 8 Jehovah shall keep thy going out and thy coming in
from henceforth even for ever.

I Unto the mountains, viz. of Jerusalem (see on lxxxvii. 1, and cf. cxxxiii. 3), whose cincture of hills is a symbol of the 'heavenly heights' (lxxviii. 69). See cxxxiii. 1, and cf. cxxv. 2.—**Whence** . . . The question is only asked to give more effect to the answer (cf. xxiv. 8).

3, 4 There may be here an allusion to the dangers of caravans. Purvey, for 'slumber,' gives 'nappe.' Comp., from the Egyptian hymn cited on Ps. civ.—

Hail to thee for all these things,
the One alone with many hands,
lying awake when all men lie (asleep),
to seek out the good of his creatures ;

also this from the *Korán* (Sur. ii. 256), 'God, there is no god but He . . . Slumber takes him not nor sleep' (*la sinat^{un} walá naum^{un}*), where note that the Arabic verbs are cognates of the Hebrew, but

that the usage is the reverse), and the cry of the night-watchman in Lane's *Modern Egyptians* (ed. 5), p. 283.

5 Thy shelter, i.e. thy defence (see next verse), as Num. xiv. 9. Sept. well, *σκέπη σου* (cf. Plat., *Tim.* 76, *σκιάν καὶ σκέπην παρέχειν*).—**Upon thy right hand**—the side for a friend and ally (cf. xvi. 8, lxxiii. 23, cix. 31, cx. 5). Less naturally Stanley, 'on thy southern side against the noonday sun' (*Jewish Church*, iii. 80).

6 Smite thee. Cf. Browning (*Saul*), 'Those sunbeams like swords.' Sept., *συγκαύσει* (scorch, or inflame), probably taking line 2 of the effects of nightly cold (cf. Ecclus. xliii. 21, and the use of Ar. *haraqá*). But the ordinary explanation of the zeugma is more natural; the belief in the injurious influence of the moon was common in the East.

PSALM CXXII.

A PILGRIM recalls his delight upon reaching the sacred city. (*V.* 2 was sung by the pilgrims who carried up the firstfruits as they entered the gates: Mishna, *Bikkurim*.) Before him rises Jerusalem, once destroyed, but now restored and thickly peopled. Historic memories crowd upon him. There was a time when the phrase 'the tribes of Israel' was literally accurate, and when from all parts the people 'went up' three times in the year—a time when kings of the beloved Davidic line sat here in state. He is not pained as he recalls this; Jerusalem is indeed spiritually greater than ever. In his sense of union with 'brethren' far and near, he utters a blessing on the City of Peace.

1 I was full glad when they said to me,
'Let us go to the house of Jehovah.'

2 Our feet were standing at last
within thy gates, Jerusalem.

3 Jerusalem, that art built up as a city
that is well compact together,

4 Whither the tribes went up,
even the tribes of Jah,

(According to) the ordinance for Israel,
to give thanks unto the name of Jehovah.

5 For there were set thrones for judgment,
even the thrones of the house of David.

- 6 Pray for the peace of Jerusalem :
prosperous be they that love thee.
- 7 Peace be within thy rampart,
prosperity in thy palace-towers.
- 8 For my brethren and companions' sakes
I would wish thee peace.
- 9 For the sake of the house of Jehovah our God
I would seek thy good.

1, 2 It is not easy to trace the connexion, unless we grant that the standpoint of the writer is the same in both verses. Assuming this, all becomes clear. *V.* 2 mentions where the persons were standing who exhorted the psalmist in *v.* 1 to accompany them to the temple. They had all 'come up' in the same *συνοδία* (Luke ii. 44) to Jerusalem, and were now standing within one of the roomy city-gates, when from one to another the word was passed, 'Let us go at once to the temple.' In his 'full glad was I,' the psalmist does but interpret the common feeling (so inimitably expressed by Tasso, *Gerus. Lib.* iii. 5).—**Let us go.** Why not 'let us go up' (cf. Jer. xxxi. 6,¹ and below, *v.* 4)? Because the pilgrimage is virtually ended; an easy walk will bring them to the goal of their wishes.—**Were standing at last.** To express the emphasis which the Hebrew gives by the arrangement of the words, 'Standing were our feet.' The clause is 'circumstantial.'

3 **Well compact together.** Such must have been the first impression of a foreign pilgrim. Jerusalem can never have had any straggling suburbs. 'It was compressed within three deep ravines such as run round Durham or Luxemburg, and on its fourth side was strongly fortified. The

smallness of Jerusalem was certain likewise to have arrested the attention of those who visited it. No large capital could have existed on such a spot' (Dr. Liddon, sermon at St. Paul's, Aug. 22, 1886).

4 **The ordinance**, referring to Ex. xxiii. 17, xxxiv. 23, Deut. xvi. 16.

5 **Thrones**, i.e. tribunals (as ix. 5, Prov. xx. 8, Isa. xvi. 5).—**The house of David.** Either the Davidic kings are meant, or princes of the royal house. The latter shared the judicial function with the king (see Jer. xxi. 11, 12, and note on Isa. vii. 13).

6 **The peace of Jerusalem.** Alluding to a possible interpretation of Jerusalem (like Hildebert—

Me receptet Sion illa,
Sion, David urbs tranquilla).

Comp. the Assyrian city Temen-Sallim, 'the foundation of peace' (Sayce, *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 58).

7 **In thy palace-towers.** Sept. *ἐν ταῖς πύργοις σου*. Comp. on xlvi. 4, where Sept. *ἐν ταῖς βάρεσι*. *Bārus* is the Græcised form of *bīrāh*, which is a late synonym for the psalmist's word 'armōn; Josephus uses it for the temple fortress (called *bīrāh*, Neh. ii. 8, vii. 2). Another synonym for 'armōn is, for an obvious reason, not used here (*hēkāl*—see Isa. xxii. 13, and note the etymology of the two words).

PSALM CXXIII.

THE idiom in *v.* 4 *a* and the general tone remind us of Ps. cxx.

¹ This passage supplied the formula with which the pilgrims of each district were summoned to the pilgrimage of Bikkurim or 'firstfruits.'

- 1 Unto thee I lift up mine eyes,
O thou that art seated in the heavens !
- 2 Behold, as the eyes of servants
are upon the hand of their lord,
as the eyes of a handmaid
are upon the hand of her mistress,
so our eyes are upon Jehovah our God,
until he have pity upon us.
- 3 Have pity upon us, Jehovah, have pity upon us,
for we are but too full of contempt.
- 4 Our soul is but too full
of the mocking of them that are at ease,
the contempt of the haughty.

2 Why **upon the hand**? Because the hand is the symbol of power (Ass. *idu* = power); it rewards and punishes, sends hither and thither, and 'rules the whole house.' We should expect 'Jehovah our Lord' (as viii. 2, 10), but the psalmist knows that 'God' and 'lord' are not synonymous—that 'Elohim' says more than 'Adonai.' He may indeed think in the first instance of God's universal lord-

ship; but he feels that Israel are not mere slaves of the Deity, but have been brought by a covenant into the moral relation of sons. Such passages as xvi. 2 *a*, xxxv. 23 *b* are not really opposed to this view of the mental attitude of the later psalmists towards Jehovah.

4 **Them that are at ease**, and therefore regardless of the feelings of others—irresponsible tyrants.

PSALM CXXIV.

A FRESH, bright lyric, contrasting with some of its companions. Form and contents remind us of Ps. cxxix.

- 1 Had not Jehovah himself been on our side,
thus let Israel say,
- 2 Had not Jehovah himself been on our side,
when men rose up against us,
- 3 Then would they have swallowed us up alive,
when their anger was so hot against us.
- 4 Then would the waters have overwhelmed us,
the torrent would have gone over our soul,
- 5 Then would they have gone over our soul—
the raging waters.
- 6 Blessed be Jehovah, who gave us not up
for a prey unto their teeth.
- 7 Our soul escaped as a bird
out of the snare of the fowlers ;

the snare broke, and we—
made our escape !

8 Our help is in the name of Jehovah,
who made heaven and earth.

1 **Jehovah.** No mere national god, but the Creator Himself (*v.* 8). And yet no mere Demiurge, but, for the fathers' sake and for the world's sake, Israel's God.

3 **Swallowed us up alive** reminds us of descriptions of Sheól (*lv.* 16, *Prov.* i. 12), but, as *v.* 6 shows, the psalmist rather imagines his enemies as wild beasts. Truly the Assyrians and their successors did 'swallow up' many weaker nationalities; the word hits the mark.

4, 5 The psalmist changes the figure (*cf.* xviii. 17, lxix. 2, 3, 16). *Comp.* Dante's retrospect, *Inf.* i. 22-27.—The **torrent** means the swelling winter-torrent of Palestine.—**Over our soul.** The innermost centre of man's being has been changed (*cf.* lxix. 2).

7 **As a bird.** *Cf.* on xi. 1.

8 **The name of Jehovah.** This great 'name' has a wider sense here (*see* line 2) than in xx. 8 (*comp.* 2).

PSALM CXXV.

COMFORT and threatening blended. Israel enjoys divine protection even under a foreign yoke. Lest the faithful should be tempted to apostatise, the days of the heathen rule shall be shortened. As for the double-minded (*cxix.* 113), they have no more part nor lot with the true Israel than open evil-doers.

1 They that trust in Jehovah are like Mount Zion,
which cannot be shaken, but is seated for ever.

2 Jerusalem—mountains are round about her,
Jehovah too is round about his people
from henceforth even for ever.

3 For the sceptre of ungodliness will not rest
on the lot of the righteous,
lest the righteous put forth
their hands unto iniquity.

4 Do good, Jehovah, unto those that are good,
and unto the upright in their hearts.

5 But those who make their paths to slant—
Jehovah shall send them adrift with the workers of wickedness.
Peace be upon Israel !

1, 2 There is no real inconsistency between *v.* 1 and *v.* 2. The believer can only be **like Mount Zion** because he 'takes hold on' Israel's Rock—Jehovah (*cf.* Isa. xxviii. 16). The description in the next verse is doubtless more correct.

Jehovah himself (*cf.* cxxi. 1) is the antitype of Jerusalem's cincture of hills (*see* on lxxxvii. 1). Zechariah (ii. 9) still more boldly calls Jehovah 'a wall of fire round about.'

3 **For the sceptre, &c.** *Cf.* 2

Sam. vii. 10. Precisely the same fear is expressed in xix. 14 (note).
—**Rest**, i.e. continue.

5 'The caitiff band of those who halt between two opinions' (comp. cxix. 113).

PSALM CXXVI.

THERE is an enigmatical contrast between the two parts of Ps. cxxvi. which reminds us of Ps. lxxxv. The moral element, however, so conspicuous in the latter poem is wanting here.

- 1 When Jehovah turned the fortunes of Zion,
we became like them that dream.
- 2 Then was our mouth filled with laughter,
and our tongue with ringing cries ;
then said they among the nations,
Jehovah hath dealt nobly with them.
- 3 Jehovah dealt nobly indeed with us :
we became right glad.
- 4 Turn our fortunes, O Jehovah,
as the streams in the south land.
- 5 They that sowed with tears
shall reap with ringing cries.
- 6 Weeping may a man go on his way
bearing seed for scattering ;
with ringing cries shall he come home
bearing his sheaves.

1 The fortunes of Zion. Zion, not Judah, is queen of the psalmist's thoughts (note the prominence of Zion in II. Isaiah). See crit. note.

—**Like them that dream.** Not, 'like them that have dreamed,' the past being regarded as a 'bad dream' (comp. Isa. xxix. 7). The natural rendering surely is that adopted above. Newborn joy cannot realise its own existence. Clericus seeks a parallel in western history. So felt the Greeks, as Polybius and Livy say, at Flaminius' declaration of their 'freedom' at the Isthmian Games B.C. 196. But 'freedom' only meant postponement of servitude. The phrase needs no parallel. It is important, however, as showing how few Jews were in the position described in Dan. ix. 2.

4 Salvation proves to be a bitter-sweet thing (see on cxviii. 25).—**As the streams . . . As**

the water-courses in the parched Negeb (see on Gen. xx. 1) are filled with rushing torrents by the autumn rains.

5 A proverb, say the commentators. Rightly ; the contrast between the toil of husbandry (Gen. iii. 19, 2 Tim. ii. 6) and the exuberant joy of harvest (Isa. ix. 2) was proverbial. But it is in form a literary not a popular *māshāl*. Hence the exaggeration, for the sake partly of the antithesis, partly of the application to present circumstances. The antithesis ('tears'—'ringing cries') is lost in R.V., which has expunged A.V.'s marginal rendering 'singing' (connecting v. 5 with v. 2), but happily expressed in Sept.'s ἐν ἀγαλλιάσει. The application doubtless is that the work of establishing the new Israel may be full of pain and grief, but that future generations will enjoy the blessed

results: ἄλλοι κεκοπιάκασιν, καὶ
 ὑμεῖς εἰς τὸν κόπον αὐτῶν εἰσεληλύθατε
 (John iv. 38).

6 Seed for scattering. Lit.,
 'a draught of seed' (comp. Am. ix.
 13).

PSALM CXXVII.

THE fullest and most suggestive view of the connexion is perhaps this: The leaders of the renescent Jewish community are like 'builders' and 'watchmen.' They are tempted (like those who take part in more modern revivals of spiritual life) to overestimate the importance of routine work. Our poet recalls them to a 'wise passiveness'—this doubtless is what he means by 'sleep.' To those who cherish this jewel of the soul, God grants those things for which the worldly wise often toil in vain. For instance, those for whom the prophet speaks in Isa. xxvi. 18 were uneasy at the scanty population of Judæa. Our poet, in the second half of the psalm, reminds them that a numerous progeny of sons is a blessing from Jehovah (comp. Ps. cxxviii.) Labour as they may, they cannot do as much for the defence of the state as the 'joyful mother of her sons' (cxiii. 8). A more meagre but still possible view of the psalm is to take the four pictures (the builder, the watchman, the man who works for his daily bread, and the 'fruit of the womb') separately, as independent examples of the truth that 'the blessing of Jehovah maketh rich' (Prov. x. 22). It must be admitted, however, that they are not perfectly parallel, for in the three first cases long-continued human labour is a condition of the divine blessing. As explained above, a family of sons is mentioned as an example of the blessings which Jehovah gives without human labour.

- 1 Except Jehovah build the house,
 they labour in vain thereat that build it :
 except Jehovah keep watch over the city,
 the watchman waketh but in vain.
- 2 It is in vain for you to rise up early,
 and sit down late,
 eating the bread of heart-aches ;
 surely he giveth to his beloved in sleep.
- 3 Behold, sons are a heritage of Jehovah,
 the fruit of the womb is (his) reward.
- 4 As arrows in the hand of a warrior,
 so are sons of (a man's) youth
- 5 Happy is the man that has filled
 his quiver therewith ;
 they shall not be ashamed when they speak
 with enemies in the gate.

1, 2 In lines 1 and 2 common language is used in a higher sense. The 'house' is the house of Israel (as indeed *bānīm* in *v.* 3 suggests) ; the 'builders' are the secular and spiritual authorities¹ who in the next distich are called 'watchmen.' Without the blessing of Him who has promised both to build (Am. ix. 11) and to 'keep watch over'

¹ Cf. Acts iv. 11, 'by you the builders,' and for the later use of the term, Levy, *Neuhebr. Wörterbuch*, s. v. '22.

(cxxi. 4) His people, the sleepless anxiety (cf. Eccles. viii. 16) of statesmen is in vain.—**And sit down late**, viz. to the evening meal. Or, 'and sit up late' (Del.); but see cxxxix. 2.—**Eating the bread of heart-aches**. Anxiety embitters even the food they eat (cf. Ezek. xii. 18, 19). Others explain, 'bread won by toil.' But if bread is won by toil, long hours of work are not 'in vain.' Surely the object of these workers was not bread but the prosperity of the state.—**He giveth to his beloved in sleep**. ('In sleep'—the accusative of condition; cf. Deut. iv. 11; Ewald, *Lehrbuch*, § 300 c.) Why make life a burden, and 'turn the twilight of my desire into trembling' (Isa. xxi. 4)? Rest is no loss of time to God's 'beloved:' He surprises them with His gifts while they slumber. For a lovely commentary, see Dante, *Purg.* ix. 52–63. [Or, 'Surely He giveth His beloved sleep,' and in doing so proves that the sleepers *are* His beloved, and that 'all these (other) things shall be added unto' them. Mohammed more than once specifies sleep as a gift of God, *Korân*, xxv. 49, lxxviii. 9; comp. Homer's 'ambrosial sleep.' Sleeplessness in the Psalter of Solomon (iv. 18) is the portion of the ungodly. Many have clutched

greedily at this beautiful interpretation. Not to quote our recent poetess, George Buchanan finely expresses it thus :

At ille amicis interim suis dabit
Purum soporem somniis.

But it is decidedly less suitable to the context than the alternative version.] A slight correction, however, is involved (see crit. note). The text might be rendered, 'Is it thus (i.e. in such scanty measure) that He gives sleep to His beloved?'

3 An example of gifts directly coming from God. In a quieter age, the poet might have chosen the fruits of the earth, like our Lord in Mark iv. 27. At present, with his mind full of the 'house' of the state, he points to children (*bānīm*; cf. *bānāh*) as the stones of which the house of the family, and therefore also (Ruth iv. 11) that of the state, is built.—**Heritage** (or, possession) . . . **reward**. The next psalm explains this.

4 **Sons of (a man's) youth**. Comp. 'a wife of youth,' Isa. liv. 6. An aged father would hope to be protected by the sons of his youth.

5 Girt with a phalanx of lusty sons, a father can defy all dangers abroad and at home.—**In the gate**, the place of concourse, where the judges sat.

PSALM CXXVIII.

DOMESTIC happiness is generally left to the proverb-writers; our psalmist, however, seizes upon the neglected theme, side by side with which observe his deep love for Zion.

- 1' Happy is every one that fears Jehovah,
that walks in his ways.
- 2 The labour of thy hands shalt thou eat ;
happy art thou, and it is well with thee.
- 3 Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine
in the recesses of thy house ;
thy children like olive shoots
round about thy table.
- 4 Behold, thus shall the man be blessed
that fears Jehovah.

- 5 Jehovah bless thee out of Zion !
 yea, do thou behold with glad eyes the good fortune of Jerusalem
 all the days of thy life ;
- 6 Yea, do thou behold thy children's children.
 Peace be upon Israel !
- 3 How well the figures are chosen ! The clinging vine, and the vigorous offshoots from the aged olive-tree (a single tree in Syria is a valuable property).

PSALM CXXIX.

ISRAEL'S retrospect (cf. *vv.* 1, 4 with *cxxiv.* 1, 6, 7).

- 1 Much indeed have they vexed me from my youth up—
 thus let Israel say—
- 2 Much indeed have they vexed me from my youth up,
 yet they have not prevailed against me.
- 3 The ploughers ploughed upon my back,
 and made their furrows long.
- 4 Jehovah is righteous, he hath cut asunder
 the cord of the ungodly.
- 5 Let them turn back with shame
 as many as hate Zion.
- 6 Let them be as the grass of the housetops,
 which withers before it be unsheathed ;
- 7 With which the mower fills not his hand,
 nor he that binds sheaves his bosom ;
- 8 And they that go by say not,
 'The blessing of Jehovah be upon you ;
 We bless you in the name of Jehovah.'

1 The **youth** of personified Israel is long past (as *lxxi.* 17).

4 **Righteous**, viz. from the point of view of Israel's covenant (see *vii.* 10, 12, and cf. on *cxxxii.* 9).

6 In March the village house-tops in Palestine are bright green with grass, which soon withers when the latter rains are over.—**Before**

it be unsheathed (i.e. shoot up in blossom). Equally possible is the rendering, 'before one plucks it off.' But see *crit. note*.

8 A 'poetic expansion' of the figure in *v.* 6. The reply of the harvesters is not given here (see *Ruth ii.* 4).

PSALM CXXX.

ISRAEL is suffering for its transgressions and pleads for forgiveness, which, according to the Old Testament writers, involves the removal of the physical consequences of sin (see on *v.* 8). Its strong sense both of

Israel's sin and of Israel's unbroken connexion with Jehovah gives this psalm a peculiar pathos. The Chronicler must have loved it; for he has included a portion of *v.* 2 in his appendix to Solomon's temple-prayer (see 2 Chron. vi. 40, and cf. on Ps. cxxxii.) The psalm has also left its mark on the history of Luther and of Wesley.

[*First Voice.*]

- 1 Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, Jehovah ;
 2 Lord, hearken to my voice ;
 attentive be thine ears
 to the voice of my beseeching.

[*Second Voice.*]

- 3 If thou, Jah, shouldest bear iniquities in mind,
 O Lord, who could stand ?
 4 Yea, but with thee there is forgiveness,
 that thou mayest be feared.

[*First Voice.*]

- 5 I wait for Jehovah,
 and in his word do I hope.
 6 My soul [waits] for the Lord,
 more than watchmen for the morning.

[*Chorus.*]

- 7 Hope, Israel, in Jehovah,
 for with Jehovah there is lovingkindness,
 and with him is plenteous deliverance ;
 8 And he shall deliver Israel
 from all his iniquities.

1 **Out of the depths**, i.e. out of the flood of calamity which has come upon me through my sins (cf. lxix. 3, 15).

3 The standard which Jehovah applies is an equitable and relative one (ciii. 10). Comp. Psal. Sol. ix. 15, *δικαίους εὐλογῆσεις, καὶ οὐκ εὐθνεῖς περὶ ὧν ἡμαρτον.*

4 Comp. the new covenant, Jer. xxxi. 33, 34. **With thee**, as thy inseparable companion.—**Forgiveness**. Sept. badly, *ἰλασμός*. Heb. *s'likhāh* (see Neh. ix. 17, Dan. ix. 9, and cf. on lxxxvi. 5) is in late Hebrew the word for a prayer for forgiveness.—**That thou mayest be feared**. The object of the visible manifestation of Jehovah's forgiveness is that the religion of Jehovah may commend itself more and more widely as

meeting the wants of human nature. We might have expected a different verb. But hope and fear are nearly allied. A trembling hope befits the sinner ; besides which, 'fear of Elohim (or, Jehovah)' was a common phrase for the true religion (xix. 10, Gen. xx. 11).

5 **In his word**, i.e. his promises of deliverance (as often in Ps. cxix.)

6 See crit. note. **More than watchmen**, tired with the night's watch (comp. Isa. xxi. 11, 12).

7 **Plenteous deliverance** (or, redemption), i.e. ways and means of salvation in abundance; cf. lxxviii. 21, Isa. xxxiii. 6. *P'dūth* only occurs four times (here and cxi. 9, also Isa. l. 2, and, in a different sense, Ex. viii. 19).

8 **Deliver**; or, 'set free;' or, 'redeem;'—**from all his ini-**

quities, and from the calamities to which they have led (see xxv. 22, where the verb is the same, and cf. on xxxi. 11).

PSALM CXXXI.

‘**L**IKE a string of a Christian Lyra Innocentium,’ says Bishop Alexander. But it is innocence regained (see xxxii. 2) which breathes through these tender lines—a humility not natural to Israel, but born of penitence (see last psalm, and cf. on vii. 9).

- 1 Not haughty, Jehovah, is my heart,
and not lofty are mine eyes ;
neither move I amidst great matters,
and things too arduous for me.
- 2 Surely I have composed and quieted my soul,
as a weaned child in its mother’s arms ;
my soul upon me is like a weaned child.
- 3 Hope, Israel, in Jehovah
from henceforth even for ever.

1 The key to this passage is either Jer. xlv. 5 (Baruch’s oracle) or Job xlii. 3. If the former, the psalmist must be understood to have renounced all thoughts of discontent at his own or Israel’s outward lot ; if the latter, to have abandoned the speculative debates of the ‘wise men’ touching the deep things of God’s moral government (see *Job and Solomon*). We may also of course *combine* these views, and in the light of Ps. cxxxix. this appears the best course. I think, however, that the former view is the more prominent in the psalmist’s mind. He knows that nothing is ‘too arduous’ for Jeho-

vah (Gen. xviii. 14 ; cf. lxxii. 18 note), but humbly refrains from definite petitions. He is not one of the ‘violent’ who ‘take the kingdom of heaven by force ;’ not a Savonarola, but a Ken.

2 He has at least achieved one hard thing—he has quieted the restless longings of a strong human nature. He compares his acquired gentleness to that of a weaned child, i.e. not a helpless infant, but a child of at least three years (2 Macc. vii. 27 ; comp. Gen. xxi. 8). Comp. viii. 2, Matt. xi. 25, xviii. 2-4.—**My soul upon me.** See on xlii. 5.

PSALM CXXXII.

AGAIN, as in Ps. lxxxix., Israel longs for the fulfilment of the ancient promises. Its spokesman, however, perplexes the interpreter by assuming in vv. 6-10 a standpoint remote from that of his own age. Are these verses taken from some other psalm from which all reference to the author’s real period has been excluded ? Or does the psalmist suddenly shift the historical scene, and reveal to us his imaginative sympathy with past times ? However this may be, he has not the shadow of a doubt that David can be recompensed in the persons of his remote descendants. For vv. 1-5 are obviously the utterance of the post-Exile Church. It is less easy to define the standpoint of vv. 6-10, which are full of abrupt transitions. V. 6 relates to the early history of the ark ; v. 7 places us

in the Davidic period, and *vv.* 8-10 in the Solomonic. Clearly the psalmist, who believes in the solidarity of successive generations of Israel, fuses three periods in one. The third and fourth strophes give a new version of the ancient promises in two parts which are separated by a comment of the psalmist's (*v.* 13). If the psalm also contained a contrast between Israel's past and present, the parallel of Ps. lxxxix. would be complete.

Observe that *vv.* 8-10 recur in 2 Chron. vi. 41, 42, but with additions which mar the rhythm (cf. on Ps. cxxx.)

[*Chorus.*]

- 1 Remember thou, Jehovah, unto David
all that he underwent ;
- 2 How he swore unto Jehovah,
and vowed unto the Puissant One of Jacob,
- 3 ' I will not go into the tent of my house,
nor ascend the bed of my couch,
- 4 I will not give sleep to mine eyes,
nor slumber to mine eyelids,
- 5 Until I find out a place for Jehovah,
a habitation for the Puissant One of Jacob.'

[*One part of Chorus.*]

- 6 Behold, we have heard of it in Ephratah,
we have found it in the country of Jaar :
- 7 Let us go into his habitation,
let us fall low before his footstool.

[*Another part of Chorus.*]

- 8 Arise, Jehovah, into thy resting-place,
thou and the ark of thy strength.
- 9 Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness,
and let thy loving ones ring out a glad cry.
- 10 For thy servant David's sake
turn not away the face of thine anointed.

[*A Single Voice.*]

- 11 Jehovah has sworn unto David
in truth—he will not go back from it :—
' Of the fruit of thy body
will I set upon thy throne ;
- 12 If thy children keep my covenant,
and mine ordinances that I shall teach them,
their children also for ever
shall sit upon thy throne.'

[*Chorus.*]

- 13 For Jehovah has chosen Zion,
he has desired it for his habitation.

[Part of Chorus.]

- 14 'This is my resting-place for ever ;
here will I dwell, for I have desired it.
- 15 Her provision will I bless ;
her needy will I satisfy with bread.
- 16 Her priests also will I clothe with salvation,
and her loving ones shall ring out a glad cry.
- 17 There will I make a horn to shoot forth unto David,
and set in order a lamp for mine anointed.
- 18 His enemies will I clothe with shame,
but upon himself shall his crown sparkle.'

1 Remember unto David (cxxxvii. 7), i.e. unto the Davidic representative (or, the Davidic family) regarded as organically united to his (or, its) ancestor ; cf. Hos. v. 5, 1 Kings xii. 16, and the use of 'Aaron' in cxxxiii. 2. This idea of the solidarity of successive generations led to the later doctrine of the merits of the fathers (Weber, *System der altsynagog. Pal. Theologie*, p. 281). In line 2 David himself is meant. See on v. 17.

2, 5 Puissant One. Heb. *abhtr*, an uncommon word (see on Isa. i. 24, and cf. *abbirim*, used of the angels, lxviii. 25). The story of the ark in 1 Sam. v. illustrates the title.

3 Tent. Conventionally for 'house.' See Perrot's *Chaldaean Art*, i. 199, and cf. xv. 1, lii. 7, lxxviii. 51, lxxxiv. 11, cxx. 5, Sirach xxiv. 8. For the combination of synonyms see on lv. 24.

6 Israel, even at this late period (comp. on lxvi. 6), feels itself one with the Israel of David's time, when the ark was transferred from Kirjath-jearim, first to the house of Obed-Edom, and then to Mount Zion. The Israelites, says the psalmist, first of all enquired for the ark **in Ephratah**, and at last found it **in the country of Jaar**. The key to this enigmatical description is to be sought with Delitzsch in the genealogies of Chronicles, which sometimes em-

body ethnographical and geographical traditions.¹ Caleb and Ephrath had a son named Hur (1 Chron. ii. 19), who is the assumed father of the men of Bethlehem (1 Chron. iv. 4), and Shobal, a son of this Hur, is the assumed father of the men of Kirjath-jearim (1 Chron. ii. 50). A full enquiry is impossible here ; but it seems most probable that Ephratah was, in post-Exile times, the name (*the revised archaic name?*) of the district in which Kirjath-jearim as well as of that in which Bethlehem was situated. The former name (= 'city of forests') is shortened for rhythm's sake into Jaar (= 'forest').

8-10 These verses transport us suddenly to the dedication of the temple (2 Chron. vi. 41, 42). They contain the only reference to the ark in the Psalter. And yet that sacred object, equally with the Urim and Thummim, had long since disappeared (cf. 2 Macc. ii. 1-8, and see Ewald, *History*, vii. 171).

9 **Righteousness** is explained in v. 16 by 'salvation.' Both are different aspects of the gift bestowed by a 'righteous' God (cxxix. 4). No doubt it is implied (1) that Israel's divinely wrought prosperity is also its justification in the eyes of the world (comp. Isa. liv. 17), and (2) that Israel itself satisfies the conditions of Jehovah's

¹ See Wellhausen, *De gentibus et familiis Judæorum quæ 1 Chr. ii. 4 enumerantur* (1870) ; Grätz, *Monatsschrift*, 1876, p. 461, &c.

covenant—is, in short, a ‘righteous nation’ (Isa. xxvi. 2); but the fact remains that both the inward and the outward righteousness of Israel are rooted in the essential and consistent righteousness of its self-revealing God.

11 **Has sworn.** So lxxxix. 4; cf. 2 Sam. vii. 11, &c.

15 Palestine was very liable to famine; hence the prominence of details like these in prophetic anticipations.

17, 18 The climax of the recompense to which the Jewish church referred in its opening petition (*v.* 1). Whatever **David** means in *v.* 1, the psalmist here undoubtedly gives the name to that Davidic representative in whose person the glories of the past shall be more than repeated. Cf. Ezek. xxxiv.

23, 24, xxxvii. 24, 25. Note also the expression **make . . . to shoot forth**, which reminds us of Zech. iii. 8, vi. 12 (Isa. iv. 2, Jer. xxiii. 5, xxxiii. 15). A still closer phraseological parallel is Ezek. xxix. 21, where, however, the ‘horn’ spoken of is not that of the Davidic heir nor of the Davidic family, but of the ‘house of Israel.’ For the images of the ‘horn’ and the ‘lamp,’ see notes on lxxxix. 25, xviii. 29. —**Set in order a lamp** (cf. 1 Kings xv. 4, Prov. xx. 20) reminds us of the Egyptian rite of ‘kindling the light’ in memory of the dead,¹ with which may be compared the somewhat similar Jewish custom of keeping a lighted lamp in the chamber of death for seven days after the funeral.

PSALM CXXXIII.

AGAINST partisanship and local and class jealousies; probably a pilgrim-psalm. The true Israelitish sentiment harmonises all differences—this is one of the blessed effects of the festal gatherings. The spiritual and the secular authority; the rich and the poor, the citizen, the peasant, and the pilgrim from the wide Diaspora; all at such times feel themselves united with each other and with Jehovah. How? *V.* 3, compared with cxi. 9*b*, gives the answer. By the bond of the covenant which is ‘lovingkindness’ (*khēsed*; see on iv. 4). These ideas, however, are not set forth logically; two allied trains of thought intersect one another.

[*First Voice.*]

- 1 Behold, how good and pleasant it is
for brethren to dwell together kindly!

[*Second Voice.*]

- 2 Jehovah’s blessing is like the fine oil upon the head
that descends upon the beard, even Aaron’s,
that descends upon the (upper) border of his vestures.
3 Like the dew of Hermon that descends
upon the mountains of Zion.

[*First Voice.*]

For there Jehovah has appointed the blessing,
even life for evermore.

2 A second voice strikes in,
describing Israel’s blessing.

3 Brotherly love not merely
serves to make life pass pleasantly,

¹ *Trans. Soc. Bibl. Arch.*, viii. 223.

but is the condition of richest blessings. A second voice strikes in here, comparing these blessings (1) to the costly oil poured upon the head of the high priest (here called 'Aaron'; see on cxxxii. 1) at his consecration (Ex. xxix. 7, Lev. viii. 12, xxi. 10), which of itself ran down upon his beard and upon the (upper) border of his dress, and (2) to the 'dew of Hermon which fell upon the mountains of Zion.' The first of these figures is clear enough. There is certainly no need, contrary to the analogy of cxxiii. 3, 4, cxxiv. 1-5, to make line 3 of v. 2 a description of the flowing beard of (the historical) Aaron (rendering twice 'that came down'). The second is not so intelligible. Grätz supposes something to have dropped out between 'mountains' and 'Sion'; but this is not favoured by the rhythm of the poem. Delitzsch declares the description to be true to nature, a plentiful dew in Jerusalem being caused by a current of cold air from Hermon, and quotes an Arabic poet who says—

Yesterday a spark (i.e. a biting blast)
blew over to me

From the high snow-mountain (Hermon).

Is this satisfactory? I think not. Yet I would not willingly accuse the psalmist of Midrashic fancifulness. He *seems*, indeed, to say

that Hermon sends on the dew to Zion; but he means simply this, that the dew which fertilises the lowly Zion has the same origin and the same preciousness with that which in much greater abundance falls on the slopes of mighty Hermon. The image thus explained may seem to be not quite parallel to the first. But the oil on the upper border of the high-priestly dress does not really come from the head but from him who pours it. And in the application of both figures it is not the upper class which blesses the lower, nor the citizen who blesses the pilgrim, but Jehovah who blesses all alike in the true 'metropolis'—Jehovah, who said of old, 'I will be the dew to Israel' (Hos. xiv. 5). On the 'dew of Hermon,' see Tristram, *Land of Israel*, pp. 608, 609; but cf. Neil, *Palestine Explored*, chap. v., 'The Night-mist.'

—**For there**, i.e. in Zion or Jerusalem (as cxxxii. 17). The first voice resumes the strain. Prefix in thought, 'How good, then, to dwell together in Zion—so lowly by nature, so favoured spiritually' (cf. lxviii. 17).—**Life**. Cf. xxix. 11. Peace and life are correlative terms. The 'living God' is also the 'God of peace'; His covenant is 'of life and peace' (Mal. ii. 5).

PSALM CXXXIV.

AN interchange of greetings between the lay-worshippers in the temple and the priests and Levites appointed for the night service (see 1 Chron. ix. 33).

- 1 Behold, bless ye Jehovah,
all ye servants of Jehovah,
who stand in Jehovah's house in the night-seasons.
- 2 Lift up your hands unto the sanctuary,
and bless Jehovah.
- 3 'Jehovah bless thee out of Zion,
he who made heaven and earth.'

1 **Who stand**. The word for priestly and Levitical service (Deut.

x. 8, xviii. 7, 1 Chron. xxviii. 30, &c.); cf. *kōhēn* from root 'to stand.'

PSALM CXXXV.

A MOSAIC-WORK (see on Ps. xcvi.), to which law, prophets, and psalms have all contributed. This psalm and the preceding were sometimes united by the Jews ; in fact, Ps. cxxxv. may be regarded as an expansion of Ps. cxxxiv. with elements from Ps. cxv. (cf. *v.* 6 *a* with cxv. 3, and *vv.* 15-18 with cxv. 4-8).

- 1 Hallelujah.
Praise ye the name of Jehovah ;
praise him, O ye servants of Jehovah.
- 2 Ye that stand in the house of Jehovah—
in the courts of the house of our God,
- 3 Praise Jehovah, for Jehovah is good ;
make melody unto his name, for it is pleasant.
- 4 For Jah hath chosen Jacob unto himself,
even Israel for his own possession.
- 5 For I am sure that Jehovah is great,
and that our Lord is above all gods.
- 6 Whatsoever Jehovah pleases, that he works out
in the heaven and in the earth,
in the seas and in all abysses ;
- 7 Who causes vapours to ascend from the end of the earth,
who makes lightnings for the rain,
who brings the wind out of his store-houses.
- 8 It is he who smote the first-born of Egypt,
both of man and of beast ;
- 9 Who sent tokens and prodigies
into the midst of thee, O Egypt,
upon Pharaoh and upon all his servants ;
- 10 Who smote great nations,
and slew mighty kings,
- 11 Sihon the king of the Amorites,
and Og the king of Bashan,
and all the kingdoms of Canaan,
- 12 And gave their land for an inheritance,
an inheritance unto Israel his people.
- 13 Jehovah, thy name is everlasting,
Jehovah, thy memorial endures unto all generations
- 14 For Jehovah will right his people,
and he will relent over his servants.
- 15 The idols of the heathen are silver and gold
the work of the hands of men

- 16 Mouths have they, but they speak not ;
 eyes have they, but they see not ;
- 17 Ears have they, but they give no ear,
 neither is there any breath in their mouths.
- 18 They that made them shall become like unto them
 even every one that trusts in them.
- 19 O house of Israel, bless ye Jehovah ;
 O house of Aaron, bless ye Jehovah.
- 20 O house of Levi, bless ye Jehovah ;
 ye that fear Jehovah, bless Jehovah.
- 21 Blessed be Jehovah out of Zion,
 that dwells at Jerusalem !
 Hallelujah.

3 **It is pleasant** (i.e. gracious, as xxvii. 4, xc. 17), viz. his name (liv. 8). Cf. on cxlvii. 1.

7 Adapted from Jer. x. 13, li. 16 (cf. Job xxxvi. 27). Nature has but one verse ; history has five. But note the characteristic choice of natural blessings ; cf. cxlvii. 8 and

Korân, vii. 55, where the winds are 'the heralds of his compassion' (i.e. of the rain).

14 From Deut. xxxii. 36 ; cf. xc. 13.

15-18 See on cxv. 4-8.

19, 20 See on cxv. 9-11.

PSALM CXXXVI.

A TRIPLET-PSALM in the same style. This psalm is generally called the great Hallel, though the Talmud also includes Pss. cxx.-cxxxv. under this title. Cf. *v.* 1 with cxviii. 1-4 (note).

- 1 Thank ye Jehovah, for he is good ; for his kindness is everlasting.
- 2 Thank ye the God of gods ; for his kindness is everlasting.
- 3 Thank ye the Lord of lords ; for his kindness is everlasting.
- 4 To him that alone does great wonders ; for his kindness is everlasting.
- 5 To him that by understanding made the heavens ; for his kindness is everlasting.
- 6 To him that spread out the earth above the waters ; for his kindness is everlasting.
- 7 To him that made great lights ; for his kindness is everlasting.
- 8 The sun to rule by day ; for his kindness is everlasting.
- 9 The moon and the stars to rule by night ; for his kindness is everlasting.
- 10 To him that smote the Egyptians in their firstborn ; for his kindness is everlasting.

- 11 And brought out Israel from their midst ; for his kindness is everlasting.
- 12 With a strong hand and with a stretched-out arm ; for his kindness is everlasting.
- 13 To him that cut the Red Sea into parts ; for his kindness is everlasting.
- 14 And made Israel to pass through the midst of it ; for his kindness is everlasting.
- 15 But shook off Pharaoh and his host into the Red Sea ; for his kindness is everlasting.
- 16 To him that led his people through the wilderness ; for his kindness is everlasting.
- 17 To him that smote great kings ; for his kindness is everlasting.
- 18 And slew puissant kings ; for his kindness is everlasting.
- 23 Who thought upon us in our abasement ; for his kindness is everlasting.
- 24 And rent us from our foes ; for his kindness is everlasting.
- 25 Who gives food to all flesh ; for his kindness is everlasting.
- 26 Give thanks unto the God of heaven ; for his kindness is everlasting.

[19-22 in the received text are a repetition of cxxxv. 11, 12, each stichus of which is coupled with the liturgical refrain of this psalm. The insertion destroys the well-marked triplet-division.]

25 **All flesh**, i.e. all living creatures (as Gen. vi. 13, 17 ; vii. 15). A friend remarks, 'It always seems to me that the psalm would be much more beautiful (from a *literary* point of view) without this verse. The poet seems to begin a new stanza or section of which the con-

tinuation is lost.' The verse is needed, however, to complete the triplet. Calvin remarks, 'Ratiocinatur a minori ad majus, non posse satis extolli incomparabilem Dei erga domesticos suos gratiam.'

26 **The God of heaven**. A frequent phrase in late books (2 Chron., Ezra, Neh., Dan., Jon.) Comp. cxv. 16, Gen. xix. 24, and the Assyrian phrase 'the heaven of Anu' (Sayce, *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 190).

PSALM CXXXVII.

A PICTURE in two parts. First, we have a scene from the suffering life of the exiles, or more particularly of the temple-singers. The Euphratean streams bordered with trees, from which the not unknown but comparatively unfamiliar 'poplar' is singled out (see on *v.* 2), and the weeping minstrels whose occupation is gone ; the proud, imperious banqueters and their unexpected repulse, are drawn as if from the life. Next, the poet opens a window into his own heart. Two sentiments glow therein with equal intensity—love for Israel and vindictive hatred for Israel's and Jehovah's foes, and by a sudden transition the plaintive sweetness which melted us into tears is overpowered by a crash of discords. When was

this written? At the very close of the Exile, or many years later in Judæa? To me the atmosphere of the first part of the picture appears to be an idealised one, and I can adopt in two senses the title given to it by the poet Camoens—‘the psalm of pious patriotic memory’ (Ker, *The Psalms in History*, &c., p. 165). Among poetic paraphrases of Ps. cxxxvii. may I refer to Crashaw’s in *Steps to the Temple* (1648), and Lord Bacon’s in *Certaine Psalmes* (1625)—the one lovely, the other dignified?

The Targum regards this as an antiphonal psalm—rightly, I suppose, though his own arrangement is fantastic.

- 1 By Babylon’s streams—’twas there that we sat down and wept,
when we remembered Zion :
- 2 Upon the willows in their midst
hanged we our lyres.
- 3 For there did those who dragged us away
require of us notes of song,
And of our dancers festive glee :
‘Sing us one of the songs of Zion.’
- 4 How can we sing Jehovah’s songs
in a foreign land?
- 5 If I forget thee, O Jerusalem,
let my right hand deny (its service).
- 6 Let my tongue cleave to my palate,
if I remember thee not,
if I esteem not Jerusalem
my sovereign joy.
- 7 Remember thou, Jehovah, unto the sons of Edom
Jerusalem’s day,
who commanded, Lay bare, lay bare,
even to the base therein.
- 8 O daughter of Babylon, thou doomed one,
happy he that pays thee back
for what thou hast wrought on us.
- 9 Happy he that takes and dashes
thy children against the rocks.

1 **By Babylon’s streams, &c.** Imagine Babylonia as it was in ancient times, with those grand, *riverlike* canals,¹ and that drapery of waving palms and standing corn which excited the admiration of Herodotus. Materially, the Jews lost nothing by having to migrate

thither. And yet fair—monotonously fair—as the plain of Babylonia was, it could not be ‘a land like their own land’ (2 Kings xviii. 32) to the ‘mourners’ in the spiritual Zion (Isa. lxi. 3), who were like disembodied souls, and had Jerusalem written on their hearts

¹ All the Babylonian streams (*nâriâti*) were canals. Friedrich Delitzsch, *Paradies*, p. 48.

(cf. Pss. xlii., xliii.) All the exiles were alike in this; but a second cause for tears, mentioned in *v.* 2, specially affected the temple-singers.

2 The trees here called **willows** are properly 'Euphratean poplars'—water-plants not unlike willows in appearance, and only found in the warmest parts of Syria.¹ Note that the Hebrew name ('*arābāh*, the sing. form in the Mishna; cf. Ar. *garāb*) occurs but five times in the O.T., and always in the plur.—Isa. xv. 7, xlv. 4, Job xl. 22, Lev. xxiii. 40, and here—and that the second and fourth of these passages show this tree to have symbolised not grief but mirth. The Mishna says that the last 'day' of the Feast of Booths ('that great day,' John vii. 37), which drew forth such wild demonstrations of joy, was sometimes called *yōm 'arābāh* 'willow-day' (cf. on cxviii. 27).

3, 4 A pendant to the story of Belshazzar's Feast.² A banquet is in progress, and fresh amusements are required. Some one suggests that the Hebrew singers should be called in,

Taunting us rather in our misery,
Than much delighting in our melody,

as Lord Bacon paraphrases, for Hebrew music was scarcely as much developed as Babylonian. By the **songs of Zion**, ordinary Chaldaean banqueters would probably mean such songs as Amos refers to (vi. 5), or national ballads such as must have been included in the 'Book of Jasher.' All such minstrelsy was hushed among the true-hearted exiles (cf. Jer. xxv. 10); centuries afterwards, the Talmudic authorities (e.g. *Gittin* 7*a*) still repudiate profane songs, and Maimonides (12th cent.) endorses their prohibition. And as for **Jehovah's songs** (i.e. psalms; see 2 Chron. xxix. 27,

1 Chron. xxv. 7), who, in Lord Bacon's words, could sing

The praises of Jehovah's glorious name
In banishment under a foreign king?

Even among themselves singing must have been dropped, so far as they truly fasted and mourned for Zion. *V.* 4, however, is not only the reply of the captives to their captors, but a justification of the hanging up of the lyres (*v.* 2).

5 **Deny (its service).** The text has, 'forget.' We might, with Sept., point so as to render 'be forgotten.' 'May I forget,' would be better (cf. Targ.) But see crit. note.

6 **Esteem . . . joy.** Lit., 'place . . . on the head of my joy.' The singer's joy is headless, as it were, without Jerusalem.

7 For twofold reason of this hatred see Ezek. xxv. 12, xxxv., Ob. 10-16, Mal. i. 2-5. The feud between the Jews and the Edomites lasted till the final humiliation of the latter under John Hyrcanus (Jos. *Ant.* xiii. 9, 1).

8 **Thou doomed one.** Lit., 'that art (hast been) stormed (or, desolated).' The Semite, Jew or Arab, prophet or common man, anticipates the future and describes it as present or past (an incompleting or completed action). Hence he says, 'I am killing him' = 'I will kill him;' 'this man is killed' = 'he is to be killed.' There is no occasion, then, to change the pointing, and render, with Ewald, 'thou desolater' (Targ., Pesh., Symm., 'thou plunderer'). See crit. note.

9 So Isa. xiii. 16-18; cf. Hos. x. 14, xiv. 1, Nah. iii. 10, 2 Kings viii. 12. This is more natural than Hengstenberg's view, according to which the psalmist writes when the divine vengeance had begun (through Darius Hystaspis), but was not as yet fully complete.

¹ So Wetzstein in Delitzsch's comm. on Isa. xlv. 4. The Mishna says that this kind of willow grew in a spot below Jerusalem (in the Kedron valley) called *Moza*, and that branches for the festival were obtained thence (*Succa*, cap. iv.)

² This, however, had a religious character. Mr. Boscawen has connected it with the Babylonian festival of the 15th of the month of Dumuzi (Tammuz). We can hardly assume that Ps. cxxxvii. was written just after the banquet of this day, and just before Cyrus's capture of Babylon (cf. my *Isaiah*, ii. 291).

PSALM CXXXVIII.

AN imitative psalm, but less mechanically so than many. Israel personified is the speaker (see on *v.* 8). I have, with some hesitation, adopted (for *vv.* 2-8) the triplet arrangement from Bickell. Verse 1 might also be converted into a tristich by making an addition from Sept.; but the addition is weak (comp. *v.* 4 *b.*)

- 1 I will thank thee, Jehovah, with my whole heart ;
in front of the gods will I make melody unto thee.
- 2 I will worship toward thy holy temple,
and will give thanks unto thy name,
for thy lovingkindness' and for thy truth's sake,
- 3 For thou hast magnified thy truth above all thy name ;
in the day when I called thou answeredst me,
and madest me bold with thy strength in my soul.
- 4 Unto thee all the kings of the earth shall give thanks, Jehovah,
when they have heard the words of thy mouth,
- 5 and shall sing of the ways of Jehovah.
For great is the glory of Jehovah ;
- 6 for Jehovah is high, and yet looks upon the lowly,
but the haughty he knows afar off.
- 7 If I walk amidst trouble, thou revivest me,
against mine enemies' wrath thou stretchest thine hand,
and thy right hand saves me.
- 8 Jehovah will achieve all that concerns me ;
Jehovah, thy lovingkindness is everlasting,
the work of thine own hands abandon thou not !

1 **In front of the gods.** In defiance (cf. xxiii. 5) of the vain gods who cannot help (cf. xcvii. 7). Sept. *ἐναντίον ἀγγέλων*.

3 **For thou hast magnified,** &c. (See crit. note.) 'For thou hast given a grander manifestation of thy truthfulness than of all the rest of thy revealed name' (cf. Ex. xxxiv. 5-7). Jehovah is, in short, from Israel's point of view, essentially 'the faithful God that keepeth the covenant' (Deut. vii. 9; cf. Mal. iii. 6), and Lagarde plausibly explains Yahveh (Jehovah) 'promissorum stator.' The text, however, has, 'for thou hast magnified thy promise (viz. to thy servant, *v.* 3) above all thy name'—an unparallelled and difficult expression not probable in such an imitative psalm.

Clericus, by a slight correction, renders, '... above all thy heavens.' This would perhaps be suitable, if, with Binnie, we might render 'imrāth'ka 'thy word' (in the sense of written revelation), comparing Ps. xix. as commonly explained; but if we adopt the rendering 'thy promise,' we look for a verb like 'hast established' (cf. cxix. 89). In this case, however, 'all thy heavens' will still be peculiar.—**Thou answeredst me,** &c. Jehovah's acts are, in Biblical language, words (see on Isa. xi. 4). It is the faith of the psalmists and prophets that the wonderful history of Israel will so affect the nations outside that they will become converts to the true religion and subjects of Jehovah's kingdom. Cf

lxv. 6, 9, 'In terrible acts of righteousness thou answerest us . . . east and west thou fillest with ringing cries.'—**Madest me bold.** Or, as Hupfeld, 'madest me proud;' Israel is both proud and humble. See on x. 13, and cf. **וַיִּבְרַח** xl. 5, xc. 10. The root-idea is strong excitement; pride, audacity, fear, swiftness are all applications of this.

6 The antithesis is not clearly expressed; **afar off** requires to be balanced by 'close at hand.' There are two favourite spots with God—'the high and holy place,' and 'with **אֵלֹהִים** = the neighbourhood of him that is crushed and lowly in

spirit' (Isa. lvii. 15). It requires self-humiliation ('*anāvāh*, xviii. 36) to reach these crushed and lowly ones. He sends down gracious glances upon the humble (cxiii. 6), but 'the haughty' (towering up in their pride) **he knows afar off** (without needing to consider them, Job xi. 11, xxxiv. 23), and leaves till they are ripe for punishment (*v.* 7).

8 **The work of thine own hands**, i.e. either thy providential work (xcii. 5, cxliii. 5), or, the nation which thou hast formed (Isa. lx. 21, lxiv. 7; cf. xliii. 7). On either view, the speaker's interest is national, not personal.

PSALM CXXXIX.

'THIS psalm is very glorious,' says Ibn Ezra; 'in these five books there is none like it.' 'That is the psalm,' said Erskine of Linlathen, 'which I should wish to have before me on my deathbed.' Julius Hammer's metrical translation and Merrick's paraphrase have caught its spirit, and that is the chief point, for the debased Hebrew of the original is not worthy of the noble thoughts. How the psalmist revels in the idea of Jehovah's perfections, especially of His penetrating omniscience! He reminds us in this of a sublime Vedic hymn-writer (Muir, *Sanskrit Texts*, v. 63, 64; *Translations*, pp. 160, 161), but reaches a greater moral elevation. He longs for a world of good men, and cannot understand how God can tolerate the ungodly, whom He and all who make His cause their own 'hate right sore.' His language is vehement, and may have been censured by him who wrote 'Be not righteous overmuch' (Eccles. vii. 16). But it is in character with the ardent nature of Jewish piety, and the practicalness of Jewish thinkers, who never indulge in contemplative illusions. There are parallels enough for it. Even the greatest of the Hallelujah psalms (see *Introd.*) has one equally jarring note (civ. 35), and the psalm of Leibnitz (xciv.) is full of such. Ought we not to try to realise the psalmists' situation before we judge them? Ps. cxxxix. was clearly written when the wise men had turned poets, and sought in prayerful strains to lighten the burden of the unsolved problem of evil. Our psalmist is at any rate in no bad sense a Pharisee; he hates not only the conscious wickedness of others, but the unconscious sin which may lie hidden in himself (cf. xix. 13).

- 1 Jehovah, thou hast searched me out
and knowest me.
- 2 Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising,
thou distinguishest my thought afar off.
- 3 My path and my couch thou siftest,
and art familiar with all my ways.
- 4 For before a word is on my tongue,
lo, thou, Jehovah, knowest it all.

- 5 Thou hast shut me in behind and before,
and laid thy hand upon me :
- 6 A knowledge too arduous for me ;
too lofty, I cannot grasp it.
- 7 Whither shall I go from thy spirit ?
or whither shall I flee from thy face ?
- 8 If I climb up into heaven, thou art there,
or make Hades my bed, lo, thou art there
- 9 If I lift up the wings of the dawn,
and settle at the farther end of the sea,
- 10 Even there thy hand shall lead me,
and thy right hand shall hold me.
- 11 And if I say, ' Surely darkness will screen me,
the light becoming night about me,'
- 12 Even darkness darkens not with thee,
but night is as clear as day—
gloom is as light, and light as gloom.
- 13 For *thou* didst create my reins,
and weave me together in my mother's womb.
- 14 I thank thee, graced so fearfully and gloriously ;
marvellous are thy works,
and my soul knows it right well.
- 15 My frame was not hid from thee,
when I was made in secret,
and curiously wrought in the underworld :
- 16 Still folded up thine eyes saw me,
and in thy book were they all written,
even the days that were fashioned (already),
when (as yet) there was none of them.
- 17 Unto me, then, how weighty are thy thoughts, O God !
O how vast are the sums of them !
- 18 If I reckon them, they are more in number than the sand ;
when I awake, I am still with thee.
- 19 O that thou wouldest slay the ungodly, O God !
and that men of blood would depart from me !—
- 20 Who defy thee with lawless acts,
and pronounce thy name for falsehoods.
- 21 Should not I hate them, Jehovah, that hate thee ?
and have loathing at them that resist thee ?
- 22 I hate them with a perfect hatred,
I regard them as enemies.
- 23 Search me out, O God, and know my heart,
try me, and know my mazy thoughts,

24 And see if there be any way of grief in me,
and lead me in a way that lasteth long.

2-4 Cf. in the Atharva-veda (Muir), 'Whatever two persons, sitting together, devise, Varuna the king knows it, (being present there as) a third. ;' and in the *Korán* (l. 15), 'We created man, and we know what his soul whispers (to him), and we are nearer to him than his neck-vein.'—**Afar off** (see *v.* 4). Used of time, as Isa. xxii. 11, xxv. 1.

3 **Thou siftest** (or, winnowest), i.e. subjectest to the closest scrutiny.

5 Whence comes this knowledge? From the fact that the freedom accorded to man is but relative.—**Laid thy hand**. See *v.* 10, and cf. Job ix. 33.

6 Cf. Job xxviii. 13, 21, 23.

7-10 The psalmist coincides with Plato (his contemporary?) in his ideas and even phraseology, but to Plato we owe the key-word *Πρόνοια*. The Hebrew sage, however, expresses with unsurpassed force the growing conviction of the Jewish Church that the Divine spirit is no mere physical force but a moral person. Hence **thy spirit** interchanges with **thy face** (clearly a personal title; see on xvii. 15) in the parallel line, as in Isa. lxiii. 9, 10. Both expressions are myths which have become symbolic (of the self-revealing aspect of the Divine Being); and hence in *v.* 10 another pictorial (one might say, mythic) phrase is used, 'thy hand,' which is said to lead the individual believer (cf. cxliii. 10), precisely as in Isa. lxiii. 14 (Sept., Pesh., Vulg., Targ.) the 'spirit of Jehovah' is said to have 'led' His people, and as in Ex. xxxiii. 14 Jehovah declares that His 'face' will go with Moses. The truth is that the favourite expression of the later writers is 'the spirit of Jehovah,' while the writers or remodellers of the early traditions prefer 'the angel (= the face) of Jehovah.' See on xxxiv. 8, and, on the Biblical doctrines of the Spirit, cf. my art. in *Clergyman's Magazine*, March 1880, pp. 129-143.

8 Cf. Am. ix. 2. On the idea of l. 2, cf. Prov. xv. 11, Job xxvi. 6; on the phrasing, Job xvii. 13 *b*.

9 'Not only in the East, consecrated by patriarchal tradition and usage, but in the unknown and distant islands and seas of the West, the power of God shall be felt as a sustaining help and guiding hand' (Stanley, *American Addresses*, p. 99). Perhaps, indeed, the poet is thinking of the already widespread Jewish Diaspora (cf. Am. *l.c.*)—**If I lift up**, &c. We need to see an Eastern daybreak to realise this fine mythic expression, with which comp. the Persian phrase, 'bird of the dawn' (Goldziher, *Hebrew Mythology*, p. 116), and, in the Bible itself, 'the sun of righteousness with healing in his wings' (the sun being imagined as a winged disk; cf. on xc. 4). In Job iii. 9, xli. 18, the dawn is represented as an eye.

11 Last of all, the poet imagines an easier possibility, 'Saltem tenebræ operient me,' as Calv. well renders (Gesenius, Delitzsch, &c., prefer 'Meræ tenebræ,' comparing *תֵּן* in xxxix. 12).—**Screen me** (cxl. 8); or, envelope me. See crit. note.

12 God's essential light makes darkness radiant (xviii. 29), just as Sheól's essential gloom makes daylight black (Job x. 22 *c*). Comp. Newman's fine verses on Sleeplessness, beginning—

Unwearied God, before whose face
The night is clear as day.

13 The secrets of the higher regions of a man's life must be known to God, for He made the complex human organism, the primal development of which to man is so unintelligible (Eccles. xi. 5).—**Didst weave me together** (with bones and sinews), alluding to Job x. 11.

14 A mere poetic description of the wonders of the human microcosm cannot satisfy the psalmist. Gratitude must overflow into praise;

else the poem were scarcely a hymn. God be thanked, both for the wonders which have been mentioned and for those which even a true poet can scarcely describe. The formation of the embryo was held to involve that of the personality; hence its mention in this connexion (see the parallel passage, Job x. 8-11, and cf. xxii. 11, lviii. 4).—

Graced. Lit., 'that I have been graced, or distinguished ('wonderfully made,' is too conventional and inexpressive): for the English, see *Paradise Lost*, xi. 168, and Luke i. 28, A.V. marg. Let us not hurry, like most commentators (even Perowne), over this fine passage, which has deservedly become a household word. Comparing man with the rest of creation, the psalmist feels overshadowed by the presence of the invisible Artist, and trembles even while he admires (cf. Isa. lx. 5). Another reading is 'thou hast shown thy wondrousness,' i.e. thy divine power (see crit. note). Hitzig adopts this, following Sept., Pesh., Vulg.; he would also transpose vv. 13 and 14. Plausible; v. 14 will then refer, not merely to the marvels of man's physical constitution, but to God's works in general. Hitzig in fact considers such a burst of admiration inappropriate to the case of human birth. But why? Take the production of a human hand. Why should not a sensitive poet thrill, like Browning's heroine, at

The beauty in this—how free, how fine
To fear almost?¹

Nor is it necessarily of the phenomena of birth, nor of single details of the human frame, that the poet is thinking (see above).—**So fearfully, gloriously.** Heb. *nōrā'ōth* (cf. Müller, *Hebrew Syntax*, E.T., § 43*b*). Without this double rendering the sense of the psalmist cannot be expressed.

¹ *James Lee's Wife*, viii.

² Cf. Bloch, *Ursprung des Buches Kohelet*, p. 104.

³ The phrase rendered 'the underworld' is not indeed 'Sheól,' but synonymous with it (see lxiii. 10, Isa. xlii. 23).

That the ideas of fearfulness and glory are closely allied, is clear from lxv. 6 (see note), and especially from Ex. xv. 11, Deut. xxviii. 58, Job xxxvii. 20; cf. also Deut. x. 21 (where Sept. renders *nōrā'ōth* τὰ ἐνδοξα), 2 Sam. vii. 23 (Sept. ἐπιφάνειαν), Isa. lxiv. 2, Ps. lxvi. 6, lxxvi. 5, cvi. 22, cxlv. 5, 6, and perhaps Gen. xxviii. 17 (*nōrā'* with reference to Jacob's glorious vision). Sometimes God's enemies are said to be afraid at His 'wonders;' sometimes, as here, His friends.

15 The divine work and laboratory. Some have found here a hint of the 'pre-existence of souls.'² In so late a psalm we might perhaps admit Hellenistic influences (as in Wisd. viii. 19, 20, and in Philo). Elsewhere in this section, however, the ordinary Hebrew view of human nature is presupposed. Why infer from these obscure words (which seem to speak of the body, rather than of the 'soul') a doctrine nowhere else (certainly not in Job i. 21) taught in the O.T.? Why may not the author, who visibly wrestles with the difficulty of his subject, compare the mysterious womb to the no less hidden realm, not strictly of souls, but of shades?³ Comp. *Korán*, xxxix. 8, 'He creates you . . . in three darknesses;' Æsch. *Eum.* 665, ἐν σκότοιςι νηδύος τεθραμμένος.

16 The obscurity deepens. 'How forcible are right words,' says Job; can lines 3, 4 be rightly represented in A.V. and R.V.? And as for l. 2, what right have A.V. and R.V. to interpolate 'my members'? The rendering of lines 2, 3 adopted above expresses well the grand idea of the providential ordering of the course of time. It must, however, be granted that lines 1 and 4 do not fit in very well with lines 2 and 3. The best connexion is perhaps this: 'In God's book (i.e. His Mind) a day was formed or preordained (cf. Isa.

xxii. 11) for every event in human history, and one such was set apart for the final perfecting and birth of the once imperfect substance' (reading יב, the Q'ri, for נב, the K'thib). But I think, with Bickell, that both transposition and corruption have taken place in the text of *v. 15, 16*. The ancient versions of *v. 16* are very perplexed.

17, 18 *a* **Unto me**, who am the subject of 'thy designs' (or, plans; cf. xl. 6), **how weighty** (Dan. ii. 11) they are! The speaker weighs them in the balance; or, by another figure, tries to sum them up, but the totals are too great (xl. 6, lxxi. 15; cf. cxlvii. 5).

18 *b* **I am still** (occupied) **with thee**: 'still,' because even my dreams hovered about the beloved theme (cf. Jer. xxxi. 26, Cant. v. 2).

19 See introd.; contrast the tone of xxii. 27, 28.—**And that men**, &c. This follows the Targum. The text has the imperative; cf. Julius Hammer—

Tödtete Gott doch den, der ihn vergessen!
Ihr Blutgesellen, weichet fort von mir.

But this omits the troublesome

'and' which opens line 2; a vocative with *Waw* (probably) only occurs where another vocative has preceded (see Delitzsch on xlv. 13).

20 See crit. note, and cf. R.V. If it is difficult to believe that 'utter thee' in *l. 1* can be used for 'utter thy name,' still more improbable is it that 'take in vain' could be used by a kind of double ellipsis for 'take thy name in vain.'

23 **Search me**. From man's point of view, the divine 'searching' is a continuous act, like the divine admonition and guidance. Contrast *v. 1*.

24 **The way of grief**, i.e. the course of action which leads to suffering and death (for the rendering cf. xvi. 4, 1 Chron. iv. 10, R.V.), is opposed to that which **lasteth long**, i.e. that which has permanent good results (more clearly expressed in Prov. xii. 28; see Sept.) Gesenius and others, less appropriately, render or paraphrase 'the worship of idols' (ררך as Am. viii. 14, מצב as Isa. xlviii. 5), which may be opposed as a 'new way' (Deut. xxxii. 17) to the true worship of Jehovah—the 'ancient way' (cf. Jer. vi. 16, xviii. 15).

PSALM CXL.

IN the name of oppressed Israel (cf. Pss. lviii., lxiv.)

- 2 Rescue me, Jehovah, from the evil man,
from the man of violence guard thou me;
- 3 From those who devise evils in their heart,
and stir up wars continually,
- 4 Who have sharpened their tongue like a serpent—
the poison of asps is under their lips.
- 5 Preserve me, Jehovah, from the hands of the ungodly,
from the man of violence guard thou me,
who purpose to trip up my feet.
- 6 The proud have hid snares for me and cords;
they have spread nets close by the track;
they have set gins for me.
- 7 I say unto Jehovah, Thou art my God;
give ear, Jehovah, to the voice of my beseeching.

- 8 Jehovah ! Lord ! stronghold of my salvation !
 thou hast screened my head in the day of weapons.
- 9 Grant not, Jehovah, the desires of the ungodly,
 let not his knavery gain its end.
- 10 Let [not] them that encompass me lift up their head,
 let the mischief of their own lips cover them ;
- 11 Let them totter [from their place] ;
 [Jehovah rain] hot coals upon them !
 with fire let him cause them to fall,
 with nets, that they rise not again.
- 12 A slanderer shall have no continuance in the land ;
 the violent man—evil shall hunt him with thrust upon thrust.
- 13 Sure I am that Jehovah will maintain
 the cause of the afflicted—the right of the needy.
- 14 Truly the righteous shall give thanks unto thy name,
 and the upright shall dwell near thy face.

4-6 For these special forms of malignity, cf. lii. 4, lviii. 5 ; also ix. 16, xxxi. 5, lxiv. 6, cxli. 9, 10, cxlii. 4.—**Asps.** Or, as Targum, 'spiders' (alluding to a belief in their poisonousness).¹ In Isa. lix. 5 'spiders' and 'vipers' are parallel.

10 With most, I take a word over from the end of v. 9 (cf. ix. 6, 7) ; but this is hardly enough, if the credit of the poet is to be saved (see crit. note).

11 The poet longs for the divine retribution. 'Let them fall ;

let fiery rain (xi. 6) add torments to their fate ; let them be so entangled in the meshes of vengeance that they can never rise.'—**With nets**, laid by invisible hands, as Job xxii. 10. The text has, 'into whirlpools' (Gesenius), or 'into ditches' (Symm., Theod., Jerome)—a questionable ἀπαξ λεγόμενον.

12 **A slanderer.** Lit., 'a man of tongue' (cf. Sept. and Jerome, both here and at Eccles. viii. 4).

14 **Truly** (יָשָׁר). The assured result of long meditation (see on lxxiii. 1).

PSALM CXLI.

AN evening prayer of tried and tempted Israel. On the one hand, many are in danger of falling away, seduced by the prosperity of the unbelievers ; on the other, the continuance of persecution threatens the very existence of the church-nation. Comp. Ps. xvi. Verses 5-7 are most obscure.

- 1 Jehovah, I call upon thee, speed thee unto me ;
 give ear unto my voice when I call unto thee.
- 2 Let my prayer appear before thee as incense,
 mine uplifted hands as an evening sacrifice.

¹ Merx (*Hibb.*, p. liv.), quoting an Arabian story in illustration ; cf. Tristram, *Nat. Hist. of Bible*, p. 304. עֲכִישׁוּב is a ἀπ. λεγ. and has no Semitic parallels ; עֲכִישׁוּב is well attested.

3 Set a watch, Jehovah, before my mouth,
guard the door of my lips.

4 Incline not my heart to any evil thing,
to practise foul deeds wickedly.

[Let me not sit] with men that work naughtiness,
and let me not eat of their dainties.

5 Let the righteous smite me in kindness and correct me,—
oil so fine let not my head refuse.

* * * *

6 * * * *
* * * *

7 As when one cleaves and breaks up the earth,
our bones are scattered at the mouth of Hades.

8 For unto thee, Jehovah the Lord, are mine eyes ;
in thee have I taken refuge, pour not out my soul.

9 Preserve me from the grasp of the snare which they have laid for
me,
and from the gins of them that work naughtiness.

10 The ungodly shall fall into their own nets together ;
[unhurt] shall I be, until I pass by.

2 Comp. v. 4, where a morning prayer is made equal to a morning sacrifice, and see Stanley, *Jewish Church*, iii. 35.—**Appear.** Lit., 'station itself' (or, possibly, 'be erected,' alluding to the upward curling of the sweet smoke).—**As incense.** This and the parallel noun are in the accusative (that of state or manner).

3 For the phraseology comp. xxxix. 2, Mic. vii. 5.

4 b, 5 Prayerful resolutions of the psalmist. He will restrict himself (comp. xvi. 3, 4) to the society of the 'righteous' (those whose standard of belief and practice is his own), and thankfully accept from such an one the 'correction which tends to life' (Prov. xv. 31). In these difficult days, each man must be 'his brother's keeper,' but especially must the priests and the prophets exercise the ruler's high function of educational discipline.—[**Let me not sit**]. These words seem required to fill out the line and to complete the parallelism.

Any meal provided by non-Israelites would be a snare to observers of the Law, but above all, idolatrous sacrificial feasts.—**In kindness**, i.e. with a strictness moderated by brotherly love (*khésed*)—the bond of the covenant.—**Oil so fine.** (Appositional construction, as in Ex. xxx. 23.) There is a play on the two meanings of *shémen rôsh* (lit., head-oil). The rebukes of the faithful friend are more precious than the 'dainties' of the perfidious foe (cf. Prov. xxvii. 6), and from their healing efficacy may well be compared to 'oil of the best sort,' such as that with which the grandees of Samaria anointed themselves (see Heb. of Am. vi. 6). They are also a proof of friendly regard which the psalmist would go without as unwillingly as a guest would go without the anointing of the head at a banquet (Luke vii. 36). The last line of v. 5 in the received text, and the whole of v. 6, are too obscure to translate (comp. Revised

Version with Delitzsch and De Witt). The most plausible way out of the difficulty is Bickell's, but it is bold in the extreme. This is his rendering of the corrected text: 'For while my prayer rose at their wicked deeds, down from the crag were hurled their rulers; and the pious heard (concerning) my words, that they had been pleasant in the ears of Jehovah.' He finds in this an allusion to some unknown event which the psalmist regarded as a divine interposition in answer to prayer.

7 The sufferings of the Israelites, many of whom have sealed their faith by martyrdom. The figurative language, however, in line 1 is not clear. Some find in it a suggestion of the future resurrection either of the Israelites or at least of Israel's cause (comp. Isa. xxvi. 19, Ezek. xxxvii.); but in cxxix. 3 ploughing is simply an image of the afflictions of Israel. —**At the mouth of Sheól**, unburied therefore.

PSALM CXLII.

COMPLAINTS in the style of Pss. cxl., cxliii.

- 2 With my voice do I cry unto Jehovah ;
with my voice unto Jehovah do I make my plaint :
- 3 I pour out my complaint before him
I display before him my trouble.
- 4 When my spirit faints upon me,
thou—thou knowest my path :
In the way wherein I walk
they have hidden snares for me.
- 5 I look on the right and behold [on the left],
but there is none that knows me again ;
no place is left to flee unto,
there is none that cares for my soul.
- 6 I cry unto thee, Jehovah,
I say, Thou art my refuge,
my portion in the land of the living.
- 7 Attend unto my piercing cry,
for I am become very weak ;
deliver me from them that pursue me,
for they are too strong for me.
- 8 Bring forth my soul from prison,
that I may give thanks unto thy name ;
the righteous shall glory in me,
because thou deal'st bountifully with me.

4 **Faints upon me.** See on xlii. 5. —**Thou knowest my path,** i.e. I reflect that thou knowest all

my circumstances (cxxxix. 2, 3). If I pour out my woes, it is not to tell thee of something new, but to stop

myself from brooding over them.
Comp. lxi. 20.

8 **From prison.** See on cvii.
10.—**Shall glory in me.** The

text is variously rendered, 'shall
compass me about,' and 'shall
crown themselves because of me.'
But see crit. note.

PSALM CXLIII.

FAMILIAR complaints and petitions recast.

- 1 Hear my prayer, Jehovah, give ear to my beseeching ;
in thy faithfulness answer me, in thy righteousness :
- 2 And enter not into judgment with thy servant,
for none that lives can be righteous before thee.
- 3 For the enemy hath pursued my soul, crushed to the ground my
life,
made me to sit in dark places, as the ancient dead.
- 4 Therefore my spirit faints upon me,
my heart in the midst of me is bewildered.
- 5 I remember the days of old,
I meditate upon all thy doing,
I muse upon the work of thy hands.
- 6 I spread forth my hands unto thee,
my soul is toward thee like a thirsty land.
- 7 Answer me, Jehovah, speedily,
my spirit fails ;
hide not thy face from me,
[lest, if thou hold thy peace towards me,]
I become like those that have gone down into the pit.
- 8 Fill me with thy lovingkindness in the morning,
for in thee do I trust,
make me to know the way wherein I should walk,
for I lift up my soul unto thee.
- 9 Deliver me, Jehovah, from mine enemies ;
I have fled unto thee for refuge.
- 10 Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God ;
let thy good spirit lead me in an even path.
- 11 For thy name's sake, Jehovah, revive me ;
in thy righteousness, O bring my soul out of trouble ;
- 12 And in thy lovingkindness extinguish mine enemies,
and destroy all them that distress my soul ;
for I am thy servant.

1, 2 The psalmist is under no
such illusion as the author of Ps.
xliv. He knows that he is not

'righteous before God,' and depre-
cates a strictly retributive treat-
ment. He has assimilated the

complaints and confessions of Job (cf. Job ix. 2, xiv. 3, 4), and reached a higher stage, at which 'loving-kindness' is seen to be an essential element of 'righteousness,' and forgiveness an all-important manifestation of 'lovingkindness' (ciii. 8-10, 17).

3 **As the ancient dead** (Lam. iii. 6). Delitzsch, 'like the dead for ever.' Heb. 'ōtām may in fact refer either to past or to future time. But though 'eternal house' (Eccles. xi. 5) and 'eternal sleep' (Jer. li. 39) are natural phrases, I doubt whether 'the dead for ever' is such an one. 'Dead' implies 'dead for ever' to an Israelite; 'the ancient dead' enriches the conception of death with the idea of the ages of his reign. Those who died yesterday have a few to remember them upon earth; 'the ancient dead' have none to counteract the 'oblivion' of Hades (lxxxviii. 13). Comp. Ezek. xxvi. 20, 'the human folk of antiquity' (in Sheól).

5 Alluding to lxxvii. 6 (that fine passage was not written in vain).

6 Comp. line 2 with lxiii. 2 (see note).

7 Phrases from lxix. 18, xxvii. 9, lxxxiv. 3, xxviii. 1. The insertion is required by the syntax.

8 **Fill me**, &c. See on xc. 14, and crit. note.—**The way**, &c., either 'the course that I should take under my difficult circumstances' (cf. cxlii. 4), or 'the way of thy commandments' (cxix. 32, &c.).

9 **I have fled**, &c. The text has, *Unto thee have I (fled and) hidden*. See crit. note.

10 **Thy good spirit**—virtually equivalent to 'Thy good providence' (good = gracious, as xxxiv. 7, &c.) See on cxxxix. 7-10.—**In an even path**, i.e. in prosperity as the reward of righteousness (Isa. xxvi. 7)—alluding to xxvii. 11. Most MSS. read 'in an even land;' less suitably.

PSALM CXLIV.

ANOTHER piece of mosaic-work (cf. especially Pss. viii., xviii.) Verses 12-15 are very original in style, and appear to be a quotation from a lost psalm, chanted probably at festal seasons.

- 1 Blessed be Jehovah my Rock,
who teaches my hands to war,
my fingers to fight,
- 2 My castle and my fortress, my high tower, and my deliverer,
my shield, and he in whom I take refuge,
who subdues peoples under me.
- 3 Jehovah, what is the earth-born that thou takest notice of him?
or the son of mortal man that thou so accountest of him?
- 4 Earth-born man is like unto a breath,
his days are as a passing shadow.
- 5 Bow thy heavens, Jehovah, and come down;
touch the mountains, so that they smoke.
- 6 Flash forth lightnings, and scatter them;
shoot out thine arrows and confound them;
- 7 Reach thy hands from high heaven,
snatch me and rescue me out of great waters,
out of the hand of aliens,

- 8 Whose mouth speaks falsehood,
and their right hand is a right hand of lies.
- 9 I would sing a new song unto thee, O God ;
with a ten-stringed harp would I make melody unto thee,
- 10 Who givest deliverance unto kings,
and rescuedst David thy servant from the hurtful sword.
- 11 Snatch me and rescue me [out of great waters,]
out of the hand of aliens,
whose mouth speaks falsehood,
and their right hand is a right hand of lies.
- 12 Because our sons are as plants,
tall grown, in their youthful age ;
our daughters as corner-pillars
carved in palace-fashion ;
- 13 Our garners ever full,
dealing forth store on store ;
our flocks increasing by thousands,
by tens of thousands in our fields ;
- 14 Our kine great with young,
* * * *
no breach (in the wall), nor captive-train,
nor woful cry in our broad places.
- 15 Happy the people that is in such a case ;
happy the people which has Jehovah for its God !

2 **My castle.** The text has, 'My lovingkindness'—a bold abbreviation of 'God of my lovingkindness' (lix. 11, 18), in which the poet, according to Ewald,¹ follows Jonah's psalm (Jonah ii. 9). Is this possible in such a context? See crit. note.

8 **Their right hand** = their oath (cf. cvi. 26).

9 **A ten-stringed harp.** See on xxxiii. 2.

12 With a sincerity like that of the Vedic poets, a well-grown population is reckoned the first of national blessings (cf. Zech. ix. 17). Different views are taken of the second comparison. Some find a reference to the female figures called Caryatides ; but there is nothing answering to these in Syrian and

Palestinian architecture, so far as we know it. Seeking for a genuine *native* image, Wetzstein and Delitzsch have thought of the elaborately carved and vividly coloured cornices which extend some way down from the ceiling, narrowing by degrees, and light up the dark corners of reception-rooms—fit symbols of feminine beauty set off by rich dress and ornaments not less than by retiring manners. This at first attracted me, and suggested a comparison of passages in the Hamâsa in which ladies are compared to images (or, statues)—not so much, it is true, for their beauty as for their long, trailing robes of price, adorned with gold (see p. 506, ed. Freytag). But then it must be also remembered that the very

¹ *Die Lehre der Bibel von Gott*, ii. 1, p. 215. On Jon. ii. 9, however, see Kalisch, *Bible Studies*, ii. 217.

poem to which I have just referred reckons women thus adorned, with roast flesh, wine, and the lute, among the pleasures of life which not all can enjoy. Is it not more natural to render **corner-pillars**, but without supposing these to represent the human form? The psalmist's admiration for the women of his race would surely be accorded to solid column-like qualities, and not to mere splendour of apparel. The rendering **carved** has been objected to, and no doubt *khāṭab* generally means to cut wood into logs for

burning. But why may not this verb, like *khāṭab*, sometimes be used of artistic cutting, i.e. carving? Delitzsch's rendering 'many-coloured' is, however, equally justified (see Prov. vii. 16); Sept., Symm., Jerome, all give 'adorned.'

13 **Store on store.** Lit., 'from kind to kind,' i.e. all kinds.

14 **Our king,** &c. The sense is clear from the preceding distich; '*allūf* is epicæne, like '*ēlef* (Deut. vii. 13, xxviii. 4).—**No breach,** &c. Cf. Am. iv. 3*a*, Jer. xiv. 2*b*.

PSALM CXLV.

AN alphabetical psalm of which one distich (that beginning with Nun) has been lost; see on *v.* 13. It is beautiful *although* unoriginal. Justly did Emile Saisset admire it as a specimen of pure and tender-spirited universalistic theism, and well said Rabbi Joshua ben Levi, 'Before praying, repeat Ps. cxlv.' (Talm. Jer., *Berakhoth*, 5). It still forms part of the daily morning service of the Jews.

- 1 I will extol thee, my God, O King,
and bless thy name for ever and ever.
- 2 Every day will I bless thee,
and praise thy name for ever and ever.
- 3 Great is Jehovah, and highly to be praised,
and his greatness is unsearchable.
- 4 Let one generation celebrate thy works unto another,
and let them declare thy valiant acts.
- 5 The excellent glory of thy grandeur [shall be their theme],
of thy varied wonders shall be my discourse.
- 6 Of the might of thy terrible acts shall they speak,
and I will recount thy greatness.
- 7 The fame of thine abundant goodness shall they send as from a
wellspring,
and shall ring out thy righteousness.
- 8 Jehovah is full of pity and compassion,
long-suffering and of great lovingkindness.
- 9 Jehovah is good unto all,
and his compassion is over all his works.
- 10 All thy works shall give thanks unto thee, Jehovah,
and thy loving ones shall bless thee.
- 11 They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom,
and shall talk of thy might,

- 12 To make known to the sons of men his valiant acts,
and the excellent glory of his kingdom.
- 13 Thy kingdom is a kingdom of all æons,
and thy dominion endures throughout all generations.
- 14 Jehovah upholds all them that fall,
and lifts up all that are bowed down.
- 15 The eyes of all wait upon thee,
and thou givest them their food in due season.
- 16 Thou openest thine hand,
and fillest everything that lives with goodwill.
- 17 Righteous is Jehovah in all his ways,
and loving in all his works.
- 18 Jehovah is nigh unto all them that call upon him,
unto all that call upon him in truth.
- 19 He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him,
he will also hear their cry, and will save them.
- 20 Jehovah preserves all them that love him,
but all the wicked will he exterminate.
- 21 My mouth shall speak the praise of Jehovah,
and let all flesh bless his holy name for ever and ever.

8, 14 Comp. the epithets given to the Sun-god by a Babylonian psalmist, 'Merciful [compassionate, *riminu* = Heb. *rakhûm*] god, planter of the lowly, supporter of the weak,' Sayce, *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 100.

13 **A kingdom of all æons** (see on xli. 13, lxi. 4). So literally. Cf. 1 Tim. i. 17, τῶ βασιλεί τῶν αἰώνων; Jos. *Ant.* i. 18, 6, δέσποτα παντὸς αἰῶνος. After this verse, Sept. adds, 'Faithful is Jehovah in his words, and loving in all his

works.' Is this an attempt to fill up a lacuna by guess (see introd.), or was the translator's Hebrew text more complete than ours? The distich is rather poor; cf. v. 17.

16 **And fillest**, &c. Sept., καὶ ἐμπιπλᾶς πᾶν ζῶον εὐδοκίας (v. l. εὐλογίας; cf. Vulg. and Deut. xxxiii. 23). God's attributes, being absolute, not relative, need no possessive pronoun (cf. lxxxv. 10, and Luke ii. 14 Tischendorf). Others paraphrase, 'with that which it desires.'

PSALM CXLVI.

'HALLELÛJAH' is the fitting title (see also Sept.) of this and of the next four exuberant psalms, which 'sum up the joy of the Return' (Stanley, *Jewish Church*, iii. 98). Evidently they constitute a group of themselves; with Ps. cxlv. they have long formed part of the daily morning-service of the Jews. God the true helper is the theme of the first psalm. Verse 4 is quoted in a shorter form in 1 Macc. ii. 63.

- 1 Praise Jehovah, O my soul.
- 2 While I live would I praise Jehovah,
while I am would I make melody to my God.
- 3 O put not your trust in nobles,
in a son of the earthborn who cannot deliver;

- 4 When his breath goes forth he returns to his earth,
in the same day his thoughts perish.
- 5 Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help,
whose hope is in Jehovah his God ;
- 6 Who made heaven and earth,
the sea, and all that therein is,
who keeps truth for ever.
- 7 Who executes judgment for the oppressed,
who gives bread to the hungry.
- 8 Jehovah looses them that are bound,
Jehovah opens the eyes of the blind,
Jehovah raises them that are bowed down,
Jehovah loves the righteous.
- 9 Jehovah preserves the strangers,
he helps up the orphan and the widow,
but the way of the ungodly he makes to slant.
- 10 Jehovah shall be king for ever,
even thy God, O Zion, unto all generations.

3 **In nobles**, in whom, if not the will, yet the power to help is wanting (see line 2).

9 **The sojourners** (see on xciv. 6). Hitzig finds here a reference to the proselytes ; he thinks that the use of the plural *gērīm* (here only in the Psalter) implies the existence of a large and compact body. But in the parallel line we have the singular, and if the Sept. in line 1 renders *τοὺς προσηλύτους*, does not the same translation render

gēr προσήλυτος in xciii. (xciv.) 6, where a proselyte in the later sense is obviously not intended? His usage agrees in fact with that of the translator of the Pentateuch, to whom *προσήλυτος* simply means an immigrant. Later on, both *gēr* and *προσήλυτος* specialised their meanings.¹—**The orphan.** Purvey, with fine effect, ‘a modirless child.’—**Makes to slant**, i.e. makes to turn aside into the trackless desert.

PSALM CXLVII.

ONE may again exclaim, Not an original psalm, and yet interesting and even beautiful. Observe (1) how the thoughts of nature and of Israel are interwoven (cf. on lxxv. 7, 8), and how immediate is God's relation to each of his great spheres of activity ; and (2) how admiringly the poet refers to the phenomena of winter. Indeed, from the progressiveness of the references to these phenomena, we may perhaps infer the psalm was written at the beginning and finished at the close of a severe winter. Verse 8 seems to place us in November, when the ‘former’ or winter rain, which ‘prepares’ the ground for the husbandman, is itself being ‘prepared’ by Jehovah (cf. lxxv. 10, 11). In *vv.* 16, 17 snow and ice are mentioned—snow very rarely lies at Jerusalem as long as it did in Jan. 1887, and frost is only less rare. In *v.* 18, the soft breezes of spring are already blowing. In this there corresponds a progressiveness in

¹ Besides the lexicons, see Geiger, *Urschrift*, pp. 351–54 (cf. p. 54) ; Kalisch, *Jouah*, pp. 59, 92, 99.

the references to the fortifying of Jerusalem; in *v.* 2 the walls are rebuilt, in *v.* 13 the gates are set up. The Septuagint actually divides this psalm into two (at *v.* 12).

As to parallel passages, comp. *v.* 1 with cxxxv. 3, xxxiii. 1; *vv.* 4, 5 with Isa. xl. 26, 28; *v.* 6 with cxlvi. 7-9; *v.* 9 with civ. 14, cxlv. 15, Job xxxvii. 41; ¹ *v.* 10 with xxxiii. 16, 17; *v.* 15 with xxxiii. 9; *v.* 18 with Isa. lv. 10, 11; *vv.* 19, 20 with Deut. iv. 7, 8.

- 1 O praise Jah, for it is good to make melody unto him,
praise is seemly for our God.
- 2 Jehovah is the builder up of Jerusalem,
he gathers together the outcasts of Israel.
- 3 It is he that heals the broken in heart,
and binds up their painful wounds: *He is the healer & He binds up*
- 4 He reckons a number for the stars,
and calls them all by names.
- 5 Great is our Lord, and rich in power,
his understanding is incalculable.
- 6 Jehovah helps up the afflicted,
but abases the ungodly to the ground.
- 7 Sing ye unto Jehovah with thanksgiving,
make melody unto our God upon the lyre;
- 8 Who covers the heaven with clouds,
who prepares rain for the earth; *prep כֶּסֶף = 5 of direct*
- 9 Who gives to the beast his food,
to the young ravens which cry.
- 10 His pleasure is not in the strength of a horse,
his delight is not in the legs of a man;
- 11 Jehovah delights in them that fear him,
in them that wait for his lovingkindness. *"ever'g comes to him who waits" (every'g)*
- 12 Laud Jehovah, O Jerusalem,
praise thy God, O Zion:
- 13 For he has strengthened the bars of thy gates,
and has blessed thy children within thee.
- 14 It is he that has set thy borders in peace,
that satisfies thee with the fat of wheat,
- 15 That sends his commandment to the earth—
his word runs very swiftly, *medicines (?)*
- 16 That gives snow like wool,
that scatters hoar-frost like ashes;
- 17 He casts forth his ice like pieces (of bread),
who can stand before his cold?

¹ Mr. Bateson Wright, however, would read here לְעֶרֶב 'at eventide' for לְעֶרֶב 'to the raven'; cf. *Job and Solomon*, p. 52, n. 4.

- 18 He sends his word and melts them ;
 let him blow with his wind, and the waters will flow.
 19 He declared his word unto Jacob,
 his statutes and ordinances unto Israel ;
 20 He has not done so to any nation,
 and as for his ordinances—men know them not.

1 This version in the main follows the Sept. The text has, 'for it is good to make melody unto our God ; for it is pleasant—praise is seemly ;' or, 'for he is good ; make melody unto our God, for he is gracious,' &c. See crit. note.

5 **Is incalculable**, i.e. not to be measured by single facts (the sands of thought, to apply cxxxix. 18), or even by the more complete results of human reasoning. Vaster therefore than the stars (*v.* 4).

6 The **afflicted** are the Israelites ; the **ungodly**, the heathen (see on ix. 6, 13).

8 The text adds, 'who makes the mountains to sprout with grass' (cf. civ. 13, 14), which Sept. completes by the line, 'herbs also for the service of men' (civ. 14). A tristich is certainly improbable.

16 **Like ashes**. The figure was selected to produce a paronomasia (*kefór-kaéfer*).

PSALM CXLVIII.

THERE are two psalms in which we seem to touch the opposite ends of the gamut of emotion—the *De Profundis* and the *Laudate Dominum in Excelsis*. The sequence of ideas in the former is plain ; in the latter, may escape an inattentive reader. To illustrate it, we may refer to the most touching and (as Bishop Alexander has shown) poetical of funeral sermons, in which St. Bernard describes to us his brother Gerard's last night upon earth. 'He made the night as clear as the day by singing this psalm ; after which, looking up into heaven, he said, *Father, into thy hands*, &c., and, repeating the passage, said again and again, *Father, father*' (Morison, *Saint Bernard*, pp. 269, 270). This is in fact the connexion of thought in the psalmist's mind,—'how great and rich and strong is our Father ;' only we must put aside the Christian individualism of Gerard, and remember that King, Maker, and Father are interchangeable terms applied to the God of Israel.

Compare the psalm with its immediate predecessor. In both poems the grand, absorbing motive for praise is the restoration of Israel, but in the former psalm the motive is more prominent than in the latter. In the former, too, nature finds a voice through its high priest Israel ; in the latter, the non-human creatures, animate and inanimate, are called upon to praise God themselves. Compare also the 'Song of the Three Children.'

- 1 O praise Jehovah from the heavens,
 praise him in the heights.
 2 Praise him, all ye angels of his,
 praise him, all his host.
 3 Praise him, sun and moon ;
 praise him, all ye stars of light.

- 4 Praise him, ye heavens of heavens,
and ye waters that are above the heavens.
- 5 Let them praise the name of Jehovah,
for it was he that commanded and they were created,
- 6 That gave them a station for ever and ever,
that made a decree which they cannot transgress.
- 7 Praise Jehovah from the earth,
ye dragons and all ye ocean-abysses ;
- 8 Fire and hail, snow and smoke,
Stormy wind fulfilling his word ;
- 9 Mountains and all hills,
fruit-trees and all cedars ;
- 10 Wild beasts and all cattle,
creeping things and winged birds ;
- 11 Kings of the earth and all peoples,
princes and all judges of the earth ;
- 12 Youths in their prime and damsels too,
aged men by the side of boys ;
- 13 Let them praise the name of Jehovah,
for his name alone is exalted,
his grandeur above earth and heaven :
- 14 And he has lifted up a horn for his people, *and (haplography)*
[seemly] is praise for all his loving ones,
for the children of Israel, the people near unto him.

*mass
glory*

2 **All his host** (see crit. note).
Comp. Josh. v. 13-15, 1 Kings xxii.
19. In ciii. 21 the plural 'hosts'
is appropriate, because other
'servants' are referred to besides
angels.

5 Between the two lines Sept.
inserts 'for he spake, and they
came into being' (xxxiii. 9) ; cf. on
cxlvii. 8.

6 **That made a decree**, &c.
Cf. civ. 9, Jer. v. 22. See crit. note.

8 The two pairs of natural
objects in line 1 are in inverted
parallelism. **Fire** and **smoke** (as
cxix. 83) refer perhaps to the

sublime storms in mountain regions,
in which the lightning seems like
falling masses of fire, and the clouds
around the summits like the smoke
of a burning mountain¹ (cf. on civ.
32). An allusion to volcanic eruptions
seems less likely (in spite of
Jer. li. 25).—**Stormy wind** (cvii.
25), &c. See civ. 4.

9, 10 Alluded to by Mohammed,
Korân, Sur. xxxiv. 10 (cf. xxxviii.
17, 18), 'And we did give David
grace from us, "O ye mountains,
echo (God's praises) with him, and
ye birds," and perhaps by Brown-
ing, *Saul*, stanzas 5 and 6.

PSALM CXLIX.

LOVE to God coexisting even in times of worship with hatred to Israel's
enemies. I may venture to apply some remarks already made on Ps. cix.
to this only too striking psalm, which has been equally misused by Mün-

¹ Cf. Ebers, *Durch Gosen zum Sinai*, p. 433.

zer, the wild but honest prophet of the German peasantry in 1522, and by Caspar Scioppius on the Roman Catholic side in the dreadful Thirty Years' War. Mohammed might have had a better excuse for quoting it (he knew the preceding psalm ; see on cxlviii. 9, 10).

- 1 Sing unto Jehovah a new song,
and his praise in the congregation of the loving.
- 2 Let Israel rejoice in his maker,
let the children of Zion exult in their king.
- 3 Let them praise his name with dancing,
let them make melody unto him with the timbrel and lyre.
- 4 For Jehovah delights in his people,
he adorns the afflicted with salvation.
- 5 Let the lovers of God triumph proudly,
let them sing aloud upon their beds.
- 6 Let lofty hymns divine be in their throat,
and a two-edged sword in their hand ;
- 7 To execute vengeance upon the nations,
punishments upon the peoples,
- 8 To bind their kings with chains,
and their honoured ones with fetters of iron ;
- 9 To execute upon them the doom that is written—
an honour this to all his loving ones.

1 **A new song**, i.e. one that commemorates a new lovingkindness. Cf. on xxxiii. 3.

2 **His maker**. 'Non tantum quia ab ipso creati erant ut reliqui homines, sed quia eos refinxerat, et ornauerat novâ dignitate, ut essent a toto genere humano segregati' (Calvin). Comp. xcv. 6, c. 3.

3 **With dancing**. 'Whoso has not seen the mirth at the festival of drawing water, has never seen real mirth' (*Succa* 49 a). On the exuberant love of dancing which lasted on through the post-Exile period, see Delitzsch's essay in *Expositor*, 1886 (2), p. 81, &c.

4 **The afflicted**, or, 'humble-minded,' as cxlvii. 6.

5 **The lovers of God** (*khasîdim*, as *vv.* 1, 9, cxlviii. 4). The word means, of course, those who display 'lovingkindness' (*khêsed*) to their fellows as well as to Jehovah ; but 'who *is* my neighbour'? At the period of the psalmist, love to God was more than ever preponderant over love to man. Cf. on l. 5.—**Upon their beds**—even after they have lain down (cxix. 55).

6 **Lofty hymns divine**. Cf. lxvi. 17.

9 **That is written**. Alluding perhaps to the doom of the Canaanites, Amalekites, &c. (cf. lxxxiii. 10-13) ; perhaps to passages in the Psalms (e.g. xviii. 38-43) and prophecies (e.g. Isa. xlv. 14, lx. 11, 12).

PSALM CL.

Ps. cl. closes this Hallelujah group (cxlvi.—cl.) not less worthily than the whole group concludes the Psalter. It is 'the finale of the spiritual

concert.' The climax is reached in v. 6. Rogers ('Matthews' Bible') renders Hallelujah here very nobly—'Praise the Everlasting.'

- 1 Praise God in his sanctuary,
praise him in the firmament of his power ;
- 2 Praise him for his valiant deeds,
praise him according to his manifold greatness ;
- 3 Praise him with the peal of the cornet,
praise him with the harp and lyre ;
- 4 Praise him with the timbrel and dance,
praise him with strings and pipe ;
- 5 Praise him with resounding cymbals,
praise him with clanging cymbals ;
- 6 Let everything that has breath praise Jah.

his mighty firmament

1 **In his sanctuary**, i.e. the earthly temple, in which this psalm is to be sung, and which is a type of that not made with hands (line 2).

5 **Resounding cymbals**. Cf. 1 Chron. xvi. 5, 'with cymbals, sounding aloud.' — **Clanging cymbals**. Sept., *κνμβάλους ἀλα-*

λαγοῦ (cf. 1 Cor. xiii. 1). We can hardly venture to distinguish two kinds of cymbals on the ground of these two epithets.

6 How grand is the development of this verse in Rev. v. 13, to which Vischer's radical criticism does not deny Christian authorship!

CRITICAL NOTES.

NOTE.—The names of authorities cited in these pages have not been flung down at random ; to each some special interest attaches. For some of the more famous of them I have endeavoured to act as an interpreter in Essay X. of vol. ii. of my work on Isaiah. In dealing with the Psalms several less familiar ones will naturally come before us, and here again each has his own characteristic merits ! How different is Baethgen from Bickell, Grätz from Dyserinck, De Witt from Briggs ! Space would fail me to do justice to these still working, still advancing scholars. Baethgen, in his articles on the ancient versions of the Psalter (*Jahrbücher für prot. Theologie*, 1882, p. 405, &c., and p. 593, &c.), has given a capital specimen of that methodical text-criticism in which our Tyrwhitt and Kennicott Scholars might, if they were inclined, do so much useful work ; may this hint not pass unheeded ! Of Bickell it has been truly observed by Wellhausen that, whatever may be thought of his metrical hypotheses, his researches have often led him to thankworthy corrections of corrupt passages. Grätz and Dyserinck have both published translations of the Psalms, based upon a corrected text : the former, with all his rashness, has now and then made truly felicitous suggestions ; the latter shows a sensible eclecticism which makes his ‘Critical Scholia’ (*Theologisch Tijdschrift*, 1878, pp. 279–296) a storehouse of valuable material. Prof. John De Witt’s translation in its first edition made many warm friends. It shows how much may be done to make even the Massoretic text intelligible and enjoyable, but it is too free to be often referred to in these notes.

The abbreviations are the same as in the *Variorum Bible* of Messrs. Eyre and Spottiswoode. The chief are these :—

Bi., Bickell ; *Bö.*, Böttcher ; *De.*, Delitzsch ; *Dy.*, Dyserinck ; *Erw.*, Ewald ; *Gr.*, Grätz ; *Hengst.*, Hengstenberg ; *Hi.*, Hitzig ; *Houb.*, Houbigant ; *Hu.*, Hupfeld ; *Jer.*, Jerome ; *La.*, Lagarde ; *Lo.*, Lowth ; *Mass.*, Massoretic ; *Ol.*, Olshausen ; *Pe.*, Perowne ; *Pesh.*, Peshitto ; *Saad.*, Saadia ; *Sept.*, Septuagint ; *Symm.*, Symmachus ; *Targ.*, Targum ; *Theod.*, Theodotion.

- ii. 7. Sense and symmetry gain by connecting יהוה with line 1. So *Ol.*, *Gr.*, *Bi.*, *Ley*, after *Sept.* (the *Kύριος* which follows *Κυρίος* is obviously

- inserted for clearness' sake). Jerome, 'dei præceptum; Dominus dixit.' Gr. changes אֱלֹהִים into אֱלֹהִים.
- ii. 11. גִּילוי. For the sense, see Hos. x. 5. But in both places ג may be a scribe's error for ח. So, at least in ii. 11, Ew., Gr. Comp. xcvi. 9, xlviii. 7.
- 12. Brüll,¹ בְּקִשְׁנוּ פָּנָיו. Another correction might be בְּהִיר יְהוָה (cf. 2 Sam. xxi. 6), or נִ' בֶן רִצּוֹנוֹ, 'Kiss the son of his goodwill' (if we might suppose that all but ב and ר had become illegible). Some reference to Jehovah seems necessary. Bruston remarks, 'Il n'est pas supposable qu'à si peu de distance David ait employé d'abord le mot hébreu [pour 'fils'], puis le mot chaldéen' (*Du texte primitif des Psaumes*, p. 76). (The usual reply is surely inadequate.) But his own version, 'Embrassez la pureté,' is not happy, though supported by Symm., Jer., Saad. 'Receive admonition' (Targ., Sept.) may be illustrated by *Bammüdbar rabba*, 10 (cf. *Sanhedrin*, 92 a), where the Hebrew is explained of obedience to תורה=בר. The only version which gives 'kiss the son' is Pesh. (a Jewish Christian's work); Ibn Ezra, however, also adopts the rendering. So also Jerome in his Commentary ('adorate filium').
- iv. 4. Correct in accordance with usage (xvii. 7, and especially xxxi. 22). So Dy., Gr. For the received text we might compare cxxxix. 14, but the parallelism favours this easy correction. One MS. in Holmes and Parsons has τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ.
- v. 8. היכל = Phœn. הכל. Comp. Ass. *ékallu* (so Haupt; Schrader, *tkallu*), from Accad. *ê* 'house' and *gal* 'great' (Oppert, &c.). Those who (too rashly, as it has long seemed to me) reject what they denominate 'Accadism' would do well to connect היכל, not with יכל=Ar. *wakala*, but with Ar. *haikal*^{un} (1) large; or, tall, (2) palace, temple. But the possibility cannot be denied that the primary meaning may be, not 'large,' but 'palatial,' 'large as a palace.' Comp. Haupt, *American Journal of Philology*, Oct. 1887, pp. 273-4.
- vi. 8. For בכלל read בכלמת (see on lxxxix. 51). So Bi. Notice כל in the next line.
- vii. 3 b. Prefix וְאֵין. So Sept., Pesh. (or do they simply transpose?), Bi., Gr. Comp. cxxxvi. 24, Lam. v. 8.
- 5. Text, וְאֶחָלְצָה. This may possibly mean 'and spoiled' (Aramaising sense; cf. חֲלִיצָה), but it seems better to transpose ה and ל, with Krochmal,² Dy., Gr. How Pesh. and Targ. read may be doubtful, but they are at least against the parenthesis. Comp. vii. 5 b, thus interpreted, with Lev. xix. 17, 18 (it takes two to make a quarrel).
- 8. With Rashi, Döderlein, Dathe, Reuss, Smend, Bi., read יִשְׁבֶּה (cf. ix. 5).
- 10. Text, וּבָחַן. But Sept., Pesh., Jer. do not express ו.
- 11. Read עלי (Dy., Gr.).

¹ *Jahrbuch für jüdische Geschichte und Literatur*, 1885, p. 67.

² *Haksaw Wehammichtow* (Lemberg, 1875), ad loc.

- vii. 12, 13. Pesh., for dogmatic reasons, 'God, a true judge, is not (וַאֲל) angry every day, but turneth.'
- viii. 2. Why תִּנְהָה? Probably to show that it is shortened from נִתְנָה (see a similar case in 2 Sam. xxii. 41); but how can God's name be said to confer the divine majesty on the heavens? König, however, calls the pointing Aramaic; the object, he thinks, is to suggest the Aramaic sense of the verb (because one 'repeats,' i.e. narrates, praises). See his *Lehrgebäude*, p. 304. Some would point תִּנְהָה, but the sense 'extends' is imaginary; others תִּנְהָה 'is praised' (Judg. v. 11, xi. 40, Piel). I prefer to follow Sept.'s ἐπιῆρη, which at least gives the required sense. Canon Cook regards this as = גָּבַה; Lagarde,¹ as = תִּלְהָה (cf. Luzzatto's בָּנָה in Isa. xlix. 7). The latter view at any rate is improbable. Hu., Bi., Gr., Dy., Pe. follow Targ., Pesh., Jer., and read נִתְנָה. De Witt now renders, 'With what glory of thine hast thou arrayed the heavens' (in ed. 1, 'Inscribe it as thy glory on the heavens').
- 9. Bi., following Sept., now reads עֲבָרִי. But see note.
- ix. 8. The verse should begin (note the following antithesis) הַמָּוֶה יֵאָבְדוּ, as cii. 27. So Ley, Dy., and virtually Gr., Bi.
- 17. נִנְקֵשׁ. Part. Qal from נִקֵּשׁ. So Hu., De., Pe.; and, among grammarians, Ge. (*Thesaurus*), Land, König, and doubtfully Stade. Others, as Ew., Böttcher, Müller, see in the form a perf. Nifal; or (as Ge. in Grammar) a part. Nifal (from יִקֵּשׁ). I have followed Hu., De., &c., but with some hesitation, as the sense seems rather more suitable. I am also not prepared to suppose corruption (cf. Hi. *ad loc.*, and Gr. on xxxviii. 13) in all the five passages in which the secondary formation נִקֵּשׁ appears to occur. Certainly תִּנְקֵשׁ in Deut. xii. 30 (where Sept., Hi. read תִּבְקֵשׁ) is favoured by Deut. vii. 25.
- x. 2. בִּנְאוֹת . . . יִרְלַק. Most render the verb 'is sore vexed' (lit., is set on fire), appealing to xxxix. 4, Isa. xiii. 8. 'Hotly pursues' is more natural in itself, and suits the next line better; cf. Lam. iv. 19. This involves either reading בִּנְאוֹתוֹ with Ol. and Brüll, or taking the — in בִּנְאוֹת to be the archaic fem. ending (which is usual in Phœnician). Apparently similar phenomena occur in the titles of Pss. lxi., liii., lxxxviii., 2 Kings ix. 17; comp. the proper names Mahalath, Egiath, Baalath, Helkath, Gibeath, Libnath, Maarath. Cf. Ol., *Lehrbuch*, § 108 b.
- 3. The verse is difficult, and the versions give no help. Most render, in line 1, 'for the ungodly boasts of;' but this has no support in usage. הִלָּל is to sing praise, generally to God, though, singularly enough, in Prov. xxviii. 4 it has for its object רִשְׁעוֹ. Here the object must be God, since 'for his soul's desire' can only mean 'for the attainment of his wishes.' In line 2, some find the juxtaposition of two readings, בָּרַךְ and נִאֲוֵן. So Geiger (*Urschrift*, p. 269), who is

¹ *Anmerkungen zur griech. Uebersetzung der Proverbien* (Leipzig. 1863), p. 44.

- followed by Merx and Bickell; but see Delitzsch on Job i. 5, and Wetzstein in Delitzsch's *Psalmen*, ed. 3, ii. 391. For the combination of the two verbs, comp. Judg. v. 27, Isa. xviii. 5.
- x. 8 (end). Gr. corrects יצפּוּ (? יצפּוּי); so Sept. (ἀποβλέπουσι here, but not in lvi. 7). Cf. xxxvii. 32, lxvi. 7.
- 9. La. corrects בְּסִכּוּךְ; cf. Jer. iv. 7. Sept. in both places μάνδρα. בְּסִכּוּךְ elsewhere an artificial booth.
- 10. Bi. prefixes צָדוּ רָשָׁע; some prefix at least seems wanted.
- הלכאים (sing. הלכה, *v. v.* 8, 14). Sept. here πένητες; Aq., Symm., ἀσθενείς. Targ. in *v.* 8, כִּסְפִינָא; in *v.* 10, עֵינָא; in *v.* 14, עֵינִיקָא. Did these translators derive, as Hi. supposes, from הל = היל and כאים for כאים (Isa. xvi. 7)? May we compare נרכה (li. 19), נרכאים (Isa. lvii. 15)?
- 14. In *l.* 1 אַתָּה seems superfluous, unless with Bi. we supply a verb; in *l.* 2 I think we must supply נָקַם with Gr., and in *l.* 3 דרכו with Bi. Notice the three Pasesq in Baer's text.¹ The text of *l.* 2 as it stands is very harsh; De. renders לָתַת 'to lay (= laying) it' (cf. lvi. 9); Hi. and Hu. more questionably, 'to take (= taking) it'; Ew., entirely against usage, 'to inscribe it.' The parallel line in the second distich shows that active intervention on the part of Jehovah is meant; but both sense and symmetry require some word or words to be supplied. For my rendering comp. xviii. 48 *a*, and also נָתַן מוֹפֵת, Ex. vii. 9 (a divine 'avengement' is of course a 'prodigy'). But the same corrected text might be rendered, 'laying up (vengeance).'
- xi. 6. Point יִמְטֹר. In xii. 4 the jussive is more appropriate than here (see *v.* 7). Similarly xxv. 9 *a*.
- Read פָּחַמְיָי with Ew., Bi. (in this context = נחלי, xviii. 13). Symm., ἀσθρακας (Field).
- 7. פָּגִימוֹ. See on Isa. liii. 8. Bi., apparently denying the existence of a suffix in *em* or *am*, corrects here פָּגִיָּהוּ = פָּגִיָּו, and similarly in Job xx. 23, xxii. 2, xxvii. 23. He quotes Lucian's recension of Sept. for the reading יִשְׁרִים.
- xii. 5. Read בְּרִית נְנִבִיר, in accordance with Dan. ix. 27, already compared by Ew., Ol. The clever tongue of these men is their god, with whom (instead of Jehovah) they are in covenant. Cf. Hab. i. 11, R.V.
- 7. Sept. gives a duplicate rendering of צָרוּף and has nothing for בעליל. For this last most troublesome word Targ. has בְּכִנְרָא ('in a furnace'), a rendering which is adopted by most (Ol., De., and Böttcher, however, prefer 'in a workshop'). But surely the word is not Biblical but Mishnic Hebrew. In *Rōsh haShāna*, 21 *b*, the word is glossed thus, בְּנִלְוֵי לְכָל 'manifestly to all.' Is it not a word from a Targum which found its way first into the margin and then into the text?² The silver stream

¹ It is difficult to believe that Pasesq is always intended simply to conduce to effect in reading. See Olshausen, *Lehrbuch*, § 43.

² *Pereant qui ante nos*, &c. Redslöb, I see, has already proposed a similar view. But he thinks 'ב' is a gloss for צהרות = טהרות 'manifest,' adding that such glosses generally are altogether wrong. He also expunges לארין. I remain unconvinced. (See his *Die Integrität der Stelle Hos. 7, 4-10*, Hamb. 1842, p. 25.)

which runs down to the ground is *in the sight of all* perfectly pure ; so also are God's promises. Such may well have been the paraphrase, one word of which has thus strangely survived. Comp. Jer. x. 11 (a very ancient gloss ; see Graf). For לְאֶרֶץ Dy. reads כְּהָרִין 'like gold.'

xii. 9, 8. I need scarcely defend the transposition (Bi.), nor yet the change of suffix in *both* lines, based on Sept., and accepted by Houb., Dy., Bi., and Baethgen. Line 2 of *v.* 8 is difficult. זְלוּת reminds us of the Talmudic זְלוּתָא 'cheapness ;' the form זְלוּתָא also means 'contempt : ' זְלוּל in Biblical Aramaic = Heb. קָלֵל. Comp. also Jer. xv. 19, זְלוּל 'that which is of no price,' and Ecclus. x. 19 Pesh., where *zalil* = *ἀτιμος*. Hence, ז' here may mean either 'vileness' (= οἰεῦτελεῖς, Symm.), or 'contemptuousness' (comp. Prov. xi. 2 Pesh., where *zalilūthō* = Sept. ὑβρις). The defective form זרם is peculiar ; comp. נָם (Num. xxxv. 6). A totally new view is given by Baethgen, who renders thus : Though the ungodly go round about a vineyard which is contemptible in the eyes of men (for idioms, comp. Job xxii. 14, Jonah iii. 3). He appeals to the vocalisation χαῖρμ in Origen's *Hexapla*, and refers to Isa. iii. 14 and similar passages as showing that 'a vineyard' had become a kind of technical term for Israel. But, if we pronounce כָּרַם instead of כָּרַם, should we not expect a different verb, such as 'tread down' or 'eat up' ? Notice too the passage quoted from the Clementine Recognitions, 128, 35 in Payne Smith's *Thes. Syr.* (s.v. *zalil*) in juxtaposition to Ps. xii. 8 Pesh, which favours the pointing כָּרַם.

xiii. 3. עֲצוֹת is usually rendered 'cares.' Hi. compares Prov. xxvii. 9, as corrected by him from Sept. ; but there it means not 'cares' but 'deliberations.' Pe. comments, 'Lit., put counsels or deliberations in my soul,' quoting Prov. xxvi. 24 ; but how does the phrase 'lay up deceit' justify 'lay up deliberations' ? Pesh. gives *tabriṭhō* 'sorrow' = עֲצוֹת (xvi. 4, cxlvii. 3), which Abp. Secker (as reported by Merrick in his note), Street, Dy., Gr., Bi. accordingly read. In line 2 add וְלִילָה with Kennicott, Street, Ley, Bi., Gr., following Sept., Cod. Alex. and Sin. (second corrector).

xiv. 4. Read לָחַם עֲנִיִּים (similarly Bi. in 1882).

-- 7. בְּשׁוּב יִשְׁבוּת occurs only in this or in a closely similar phrase ; the same would be true of שְׁבִית, but for Num. xxi. 29, if the text be correct, where it means 'captivity.' There is often a hesitation between the two forms.¹ In expressions like this,² verb and noun are generally cognate ; why should not this be the case here ? Comp. לָזוּת from לָזוּ, which is found in the construct state with (ז) in Prov. iv. 24 ; and see Olshausen, *Lehrbuch*, pp. 412, 417 (cf. p. 276) ; Böttcher, *Sprachlehre*, § 464 ; Ewald, *Lehrbuch*, § 165 b. It is important to notice that, while 'turn the fortunes' (lit. 'turn a turning,' or better,

¹ נִשְׁבִּית occurs five times as K'thib and six times as Q'ri.

² See the list in Ley, *Die metrische Formen der hebr. Poesie* (1866), pp. 49-60.

- 'restore a restoration') will suit all the passages in which the phrase occurs, 'turn the captivity' will not (see, e.g., Deut. xxx. 3, Jer. xxix. 14, xxx. 3, Ezek. xvi. 53, xxix. 14, and Job xlii. 10). Kamphausen, after discussing the point, renders 'jemandes Wiederherstellung bewirken.' The debate, however, is not absolutely closed. Cf. on cxxvi. 1.
- xv. 4. Point יָמַר (as Ezek. xlvi. 14); the form follows the analogy of verbs עָע. See König, *Lehrgebäude*, i. 466.
- xvi. 2. Point אָמַרְתָּ; cf. יָרַעְתָּ cxi. 13, Job xlii. 2; also 1 Kings viii. 48, Ezek. xvi. 59. So Sept., Pesh., Vulg., Ew., De., Pe., and most. In line 2, read בָּלְעָרִיךָ בָּל with Houb., Bi. De. and others get the same sense from the text (עַל = 'beyond,' Gen. xlvi. 22; cf. lxxxix. 8, xcvi. 3); and so perhaps did Symm., Jer., Targ. (claimed with Pesh. by Houb.).
- 3. The text is evidently in disorder. The Sept. does not help, in spite of Baethgen's clever discussion in *Theol. Studien und Kritiken*, 1880, p. 754; Michaelis had led the way (see Schnurrer's *Dissertationes*, 1790, pp. 124-126). Buhl has recently taken up the same wrong clue. The only satisfactory view of the text is suggested by Hitzig, who renders line 1 thus: 'Let it be for the holy ones in the land;' i.e. 'let a part of my newly acquired goods be for my friends, Jehovah's worshippers, who are not, like me, outside the borders of the land of Israel' (he regards the psalm as Davidic, and refers to 1 Sam. xxx. 26). This is fantastic, but it remains true that 'no ancient reader could help connecting הַמָּה with לְקְרוּשִׁים (see Job xli. 3, Gen. xxxi. 16, 43).' Clearly it is a marginal gloss on the word אֲדִירִים—'this relates to the holy ones,' &c.
- Read וְאֲדִירִיךָ. Notice the following 3.
- 4. Read יָרַבְנָה with Targ., Hu., Bi.
- 5. Read תְּמִיד with Dy., Bi., and (formerly) Hi. See note, p. 40. Text, תּוֹמִיד; the double *scriptio plena* is against König's and De.'s view that it is part. Qal from תָּמַד.
- 10. הַסִּירָךְ is the reading presupposed by all the ancient versions, and given by the best editions and by the majority of MSS. (including most important ones, which do not even mention a Q'ri); it is also adopted by many old Jewish commentators (against their controversial interest). The superfluous י was probably caused by the י preceding the consonant ד; for the same cause and effect, see Gen. xvi. 5, Ezek. ix. 5, 1 Sam. xxvi. 8, where (as here in our printed Bibles) the Q'ri deletes the י. Comp. Pusey, *Daniel the Prophet*, p. 505.
- xvii. 3. Close line 2 with יַמְתִּי ' (any) evil device that is mine;' cf. עֲנִיָּה xlviii. 24. So Sept., Pesh., Targ. (altern. rend.), and perhaps Jerome (some MSS.), followed by Dathe, Hu., Pe.
- 14. The three opening words in the text are intolerable; they spoil both sense and symmetry. מַמְתָּם is simply a repetition; יָדְךָ a gloss

on חרבך (v. 13). So Ol., Bi. Notice the Paseq, and cf. foot-note on x. 14 (above). In *l.* 3 I follow Ew., Hu., De., Pe.; Ol. and Hi. render, 'whose sons have enough' (but why not בניהם?). But Bi. is plausible; he reads—ישבעו בכל-טוב ישירו בנים.

xvii. 14. חָלַד. This interesting word 'occurs five times in the poetical books, twice in the sense of lifetime, with the accessory idea of brevity, Pss. xxxix. 6, lxxxix. 48; twice in that of the (temporary) world, Pss. xvii. 14, xlv. 2; and once in a sense near that of *Ar. khalada* "duravit" [and hence "perennavit"], Job xvii. 11, where Renan renders well, according to the context, "l'avenir." The root-meaning must be sought in Aramaic; in all the applications of Aram. חָלַד, 'penetrating deeply' is an essential element. So too in Talmudic, החלוד means 'he plunged the sacrificial knife' (*Notes and Criticisms on the Text of Isaiah*, 1868, p. 36). The scribes who transposed ל and ד in xxxix. 5 (see crit. note) and Isa. xxxviii. 11 felt the new sense of brevity which in Hebrew poetry חָלַד seems to have acquired.

xviii. The 'interminable' question (as Prof. W. H. Green has called it) of the origin and relation of the two recensions of this psalm (that in the Psalter and that in 2 Sam. xxii.) cannot be discussed fully within our limits. One theory—that of Hengst.—is that the variations in Samuel are intentional and due to David himself. He appeals to the fact that *prophets* sometimes quote from their predecessors, introducing variations which affect the sense. His real argument, however, is that an Old Testament text cannot have been so very carelessly transcribed even before the collection of the Canon—an argument which few would now treat seriously. The truth is that even the most interesting variations do not materially affect the sense. The view of God and of his relation to the psalmist is the same in both, unless (1) the ארחמך in Ps. xviii. 2 (Mass. text) is genuine, and unless (2) the האיר in Ps. xviii. 29 has been inserted out of reverence (to avoid calling God אגר), in both which cases there is a presumption that the text in 2 Sam. is more original than that in the Psalter (see, however, below). It should be noticed that in neither text do the names of God appear to have been altered, as in some of the psalms. Böttcher finds a 'temple-recension' in the Psalter and a 'lay-recension' in 2 Samuel. The theory has this element of truth (according to De.)—that the Samuel-text contains not a few licences of popular speech. But are the roughnesses of 2 Sam. the licences which a careless transcriber allowed himself, or do they represent an earlier phase of the language? To the former De. inclines; to the latter, among ourselves, Prof. Kirkpatrick, who holds that the text in the Psalter has been subjected to a careful revision at a later date, in which roughnesses were smoothed away, unusual words and constructions simplified, and obscure expressions explained. The probability is, I think, that the copy from which the Samuel-text was taken was an older one than that which the other text represents,

but that the latter contains some original readings. The first part of this conclusion is based upon the prominence of the *scriptio defectiva* in Samuel; the latter, upon 'subjective' but not therefore arbitrary decisions as to the comparative merits of readings. It is worth noticing that the Sept. both in Samuel and in Psalms inclines upon the whole to the Massoretic text of Ps. xviii. We cannot lay too much stress upon this, as the Sept. texts may have been tampered with by a harmonist. Certain MSS. of the Sept. of Samuel (19, 82, 93, 108) do in fact form a peculiar recension which presupposes a different Hebrew text from the received Greek text. See further W. H. Bennett, *Hebraica*, 1887, pp. 65-86; Joel Müller, *Massechet Soferim* (1878), pp. 115-6; H. P. Smith, *Presbyterian Review*, 1885, pp. 630, 631.

- xviii. 2. רחם 'to love' occurs repeatedly in Nabatæan inscriptions (Doughty); cf. Ass. *râmu*. Dr. Hort would connect ארחמך (pointing as Piel) with the title, 'and he (Jehovah) said, I will have mercy on thee.' Against this is the fact that in 2 Sam. xxii. 2 ויאמר introduces the words of the psalm. I read אַרְמִיָּךְ (xxx. 2) with Ol., Dy., Bi.
- 4. מְהֵלֵל. Klostermann, מְפִילֵל 'as an umpire' (1 Sam. ii. 25). Cf. on v. 48.
- 5. Read מִשְׁבְּרֵי as 2 Sam. xxii. Klostermann reads, for שְׂאוֹל מִים with Sept. 2 Sam. *l.c.* (Lucian's recension).
- 13. 2 Sam., under the influence of v. 9, changes עָבְרוּ into בָּעָרוּ, and wrongly omits בָּרַד וְ עָבְיוּ is also wanting; but is not this merely a miswritten עָבְרוּ? Street (1790) and Woods (*Hebraica*, 1887, p. 262) follow 2 Sam.
- 14. Following the Samuel-recension, which has but two lines.
- 15. Read בְּרָקִים בְּרַק, with Bennett, Klostermann, and Baethgen (after 2 Sam. xxii., Sept.). Cf. cxliv. 6 *a*, which alludes to our passage.
- 16. For מִיָּם, read יָם, with 2 Sam. xxii. 16 (and all critics).
- 30. Read אָרִין (or נָדָר) with La., Klostermann. The verb is also thus pointed by Ew., Ol., De., Dy., Gr., Sept. (Lucian), δραμοῦμαι πεφραγμένος (A. B. μονόζωνος).
- 34. Klostermann plausibly, בְּמוֹת (suffix misleading).
- 42. 2 Sam. has אָדָּקָם (so Ew., Ol.), side by side with the corrupt variant אָרְקָעָם (an instructive phenomenon!).
- 44. Read עֲמִים. 2 Sam. has עָמִי, which Klostermann adopts. But see on xlv. 9.
- 48. וידבר (cf. xlvi. 4). Strictly, 'and drove (under me).' If this psalm and Ps. xlvii. be late, the presence of the word can be more easily explained, but necessity there is none. 2 Sam. has מוֹרִיד, which Klostermann (desirous to reduce the number of possible *imitations*) prefers. So too Prof. Briggs. I would rather assume that the scribe of 2 Sam. wrote just here from memory (like Sept. and Targ.), and therefore (like Sept. 2 Sam. in Lucian's text and Targ.) paraphrased.
- xix. 5. Read קוֹלָם or קָלָם with Cappel, Ol., Ge., Bö., Dy., Bi., Gr. A

third line is necessary to the harmony of the verse ; it possibly contained a reference to the heavens, so that we need not, with Brüll, correct בהם into במרום.

- xix. 7. This verse seems incomplete ; it was probably followed by several more distichs, which may have been lost in the great *literary* catastrophe of the Exile.
- 15. Insert תמיד with Ley (Sept. *διαιπαντός*, as xvi. 8, &c.).
- xx. 6. Read נָנִיל with Gr. ; Bi., נָנִהֵל (after Sept., Pesh.), but the construction seems doubtful. Friedr. Del. adventurously explains the text by the Ass. *dagālu* 'to see, look at,' whence *diglu* = דִּגְלָה, 'banner' (*Prolegomena*, pp. 59-61).
- 10. Read נָעַנְנִי, and attach הַפְּלִיָּה to line 1 with Sept., Bi. In the main, most moderns agree, including J. Forbes (*Studies*, 1888).
- xxii. 2. Insert לִי הַקְּשִׁיבָה in line 1, אָתָּה in line 2, and read מִי־הִבְרִי in line 3, with Bi. The construction, 'far from my salvation are the words of my roaring' has high ancient authority (Sept., Aq., Symm., Theod., Quinta and Sexta in Field, Jer., and Targ.). Baethgen adopts it, taking 'salvation' = 'saviour' (cf. xlii. 6). But how unnatural ! Possibly we should read in l. 2 מִשְׁוֹעֵתִי (cf. xl. 2) with Hi., Dy., Gr.
- 9. Read זָל with Bi., after Sept. *ἤλαπισεν*, Pesh., Jer. Comp. Matt. xxvii. 43 (*πέποιθεν*).
- 10. נָהִי. Point either נָהִי (from נָוָה, transitive, as Mic. iv. 10), or נָהִי, as Mass. text, from a collateral form נָהָה (so Hi.).
- 16. Read חָפִי with most critics (an early emendation ; see Ibn Ezra). De. keeps 'my strength' in his translation, but admits that חָפִי is preferable to his exposition.
- 17. Read כָּרוּ = כָּרוּ. For the *scriptio plena*, cf. Ezek. xxviii. 27, Hos. x. 14, Prov. xiii. 23. Some verb-form is certainly presupposed by all the versions (though Targ. gives the alternative rendering 'as a lion'). The Jewish tradition too, as embodied in the Massoretic treatise *Ochla weOchla* (no. 59, ed. Frensdorff), rejects the rendering 'as a lion.' It must be admitted indeed that this is the natural version of כָּאֲרִי, which is the reading of most MSS. and eds. of the Heb. text. But the context requires a perfect, and י and ו are too easily confounded for us to stumble at the necessary correction, for which there is an exact parallel in Ezra x. 44 (Kay), and which is indeed, as it seems to me, presupposed by the exegetical tradition preserved in the Massora. On the versions, see Pe.'s note, and cf. Baethgen, *Jahrbücher für prot. Theologie*, 1882, p. 614 ; De., *Complutensische Varianten* (1878), p. 27 ; La., *Orientalia*, ii. 64. Among emendations, I prefer Brüll's כָּתָרִי (א and ת could be confounded in the old Hebrew character ; see Judg. ix. 31 *Variorum Bible*, and Num. xxxii. 32 Sept.).
- 22. עֵינֵיתָנִי. Hi., Riehm, and Bi. take the Waw which opens the clause for a Waw consecutive. But is this separation between the Waw and its perfect possible ? Bö. takes the perfect as having a precative force in itself in certain contexts (whether a Waw precedes or not).

- But see Driver, *Hebrew Tenses*, § 20. Sept. seems to have read, not עֲנִיתִי (Thrupp), but עָנִיתִי.
- xxii. 30. Read אַךְ לֹא יִשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ with Pinsker, Bruston, Baethgen, Gr. For דְּשָׁנִי, Gr. ἰσχύϊ, cf. Dan. xii. 2, Brüll עֲנִיתִי.
- 30, 31. Sense and symmetry require us (with Hu., Bi.) to attach the last clause of *v.* 30 to *v.* 31. We may either take the clause hypothetically, or render as I have done. On the virtually relative clause, see Pe. Bi. inserts וְאִשֶּׁר. The versions are in perplexity; Sept., Quinta, Sexta, Septima (in Field), and Pesh. read נַפְשִׁי. So Lowth and Horsley; so too Geiger, continuing לֹא (but then we want הִנֵּה, 'if he would revive my soul, my seed should serve him').
- 31. Read זָרְעוּ, with Targ. (זְרַעֲיָהּ הָאֲבָרָהֶם); דָּאֵב is a gloss. Sept. זָרְעִי (same mistake as above; comp. on xxiv. 4). זָרְעוּ was inserted to make sense after the disarrangement of the verses. Baethgen, however, זָרְעִי יַעֲבֹד.
- 32. Read לָדוֹר יִבָּא נִירוֹ (taking over ל' from *v.* 31). Sept. γενεὰ ἢ ἐρχομένη καὶ ἀναγγελουῖσι; Aq. εἰς γενεὰν ἐλεύσονται καὶ ἀναγγελουῖσι. Pe. agrees in his exegesis.
- xxiii. 2. Friedr. Del.'s explanation ¹ of נָהַל from Ass. *na'alu* a synonym (not necessarily an exact one) of *na'hu* 'to rest' is plausible. 'To make to repose' will suit here and in xxxi. 4 (see crit. note). The derived sense, 'to sustain with food,' will also suit in Gen. xlvii. 17 (but 2 Chron. xxxii. 22 may be corrupt—see *Variorum Bible*), where Sept. ἐξέθρεψεν. This is also Sept.'s rendering here; Pesh., however, follows Targ. (רַבְרַנִּי 'leadeth me'). Are there two roots, as R. D. Wilson supposes (*Presbyt. Rev.*, April 1885, pp. 319–321)? or, since '(gently) lead' will suit every passage but Gen. xlvii. 17, shall we say that 'sustain with food' is a derived meaning (not difficult to explain)?
- 4. The structure of this artistic poem requires some addition here.
- צִלְמוֹת. See crit. note on Isa. ix. 1, and *Hebraica*, April 1885, pp. 251, 252.
- 6. Point שְׁבַתִּי with Ol., Dy. (Sept., Symm., and probably Pesh., Jer.), as xxvii. 4. שְׁבַתִּי cannot be for וַיִּשְׁבַּתִּי in spite of Ew. and Gr. Hengst., Hu., Pe. agree that it is an infin. with suffix.
- xxiv. 4. Gr. adopts the Q'rî נַפְשִׁי, supported by MSS. (one is dated 1294), most eds., Saadia, Abulwalid, Rashi, and Kimchi, but against all the versions. See Pe., and cf. on xxii. 31.
- 6. In line 1, Sept. (Lucian, according to Bi.) suggests דְּרַשִׁי יְהוָה; in line 2, Sept. has τὸ πρόσωπον τοῦ θεοῦ Ἰακώβ. So (or else, as Pesh., 'thy face, O God of Jacob') Houb., Lowth, and most moderns. De Witt, 'of those in Jacob that seek thy face, O God,' as if מִבְּנֵי had dropped out. Hi., De., Baethgen also adhere to the Mass. text.
- xxv. 1, 5, 7, 18. See Commentary. Note, however, that some MSS. at *v.* 5 c (Mass. text) read וְאוֹתָךְ, making a fresh verse begin here (Sept.

¹ *The Hebrew Language*, &c. (1883), pp. 5, 6; *Prolegomena* (1886), pp. 17–20.

also has *καὶ σὲ ὑπέμεινα*). Pe. prefers this way of helping the alphabetic arrangement.

xxv. 2. Omit אלהי, with Bi., or attach it to preceding line.

— 8. Point חַטָּאִים with Bi. and (virtually) Hu.

— 17. Baethgen הַרְחִיב וּמַמ' (Cant. vi. 5). With most, I read הַרְחִיב וּמַמ' (2 Kings viii. 6).

— 21. Without יהוה (Sept., Bi.) the verse is short.

xxvii. 8. Sept.'s ἐξέζητησα τὸ πρόσωπόν σου may presuppose אֲבַקֵּשׁ אֶת־כְּנִיד. These words may possibly have been written twice over by mistake, Sept. doing its best to make sense. This, I suppose, is why Bi. omits פני ב', making the verse a distich. See, however, Baethgen, who holds that both the forms in which the Sept. version is handed down are corrupt. The other versions are perplexed.

— 13. The Mass. text prefixes לֹלָא with three points above and four below, which, as most agree, indicate corruption or a various reading (see references in Strack, *Prolegomena*, p. 91). I presume that לִי was the original reading (at the end of v. 12), and that it was corrupted into לוֹ (comp. Sept.). This rendered the text, strictly speaking, untranslatable; לוֹ therefore became לֹא and was prefixed to v. 13 ('I despaired,' &c.). Last of all, the two readings were combined, but with warning points.

xxviii. 8. Read לְעַנּוֹן (xxviii. 8) with Bō., Ol., Hu., Krochmal, Dy., Gr., Bi., König (after Sept.). Comp. xxix. 11. The late Prof. Weir of Glasgow made a similar correction in Isa. xxxv. 8.

xxix. 1. בני אלים. 'Sons of' = members of (a guild or society). So Neh. iii. 8 'a son of the goldsmiths,' 'a son of the apothecaries;' and so a certain Syrian saint John (Johannan) is called *bar naggōrē*, i.e. a member of the carpenters' guild (Hoffmann, *Verhandlungen*, &c., 1873, p. 89).

— 6. Transfer לַבְנוֹן to line 1 (removing verb-suffix). So Bi.

— 7. Insert צוּרִים and יֵהַצְבֵם with Bi.

— 9. Read אֱלוֹת, with Lowth, Secker, Dy., Gr., Bi., Thrupp, Jennings and Lowe.

— 10. There are five possible renderings:—

(a) 'Yahwe sat at the Flood, and Yahwe sitteth on as a king for ever;' i.e. 'from that moment went on and continues sitting,' to account for the Imperfect with strong Waw (Driver, *Hebrew Tenses*, § 79).

(b) 'Yahwe sat (enthroned) at the flood; therefore [consequently] Yahwe sitteth as king for ever;' i.e. the fact that Yahwe controlled the flood, produced by rain-storms and swollen torrents, increases the psalmist's faith in the general truth of His government of the world.

(c) 'Yahwe sat (enthroned) for the flood' (= to produce the storm-flood), &c. Cf. ix. 8.

(d) 'Yahwe sat (enthroned) on the flood, and Yahwe sitteth on as king for ever;' i.e. continues His royal rule from the time when He

erected His throne on the created heavenly ocean (already referred to in *v.* 3). For 'on the flood,' cf. ix. 5.

As to (*a*). Noah is very rarely mentioned outside Genesis (see Isa. liv. 9, Ezek. xiv. 14), and least of all should we expect a reference (and such an abrupt reference) to the Flood in a descriptive poem like this, so free from any tinge of penitential sadness. Against (*b*) and (*c*) it may be urged that the foregoing description contains no mention of a rain-storm. One may be surprised at this, remembering the fine parallel passage in Imra-al-Ḳais (see Lyall, p. 103); but we must not interpret *v.* 10 as if the omission did not exist. Against (*d*) is the preposition, which does not harmonise with the construction in *v.* 3; besides the construction seems too condensed ('sitteth on the flood' = 'sitteth in his upper chambers which are on the flood').

But is it indubitable that מַבּוּל is rightly translated 'flood'? I know that this view is favoured by אֶת־הַמַּבּוּל מִיַּם עַל־הָאָרֶץ in Gen. vi. 17 (cf. vii. 6), by the paraphrase מִי נָח in Isa. liv. 9, and by Sept.'s rendering κατακλυσμός. But it is clear (as Schrader and Dillmann have pointed out) that מַבּוּל was already an archaic term in the time of the early narrators, and the paraphrase which they employed need not be exact. The psalmist is certainly not bound by their specialising interpretation; nor is the philologist. The case is parallel to that of נְפִילִים, which an early narrator paraphrases by גְּפָרִים (Gen. vi. 4), though probably the root נָפַל is a sister-form of נָבַל = Ass. *nabálu* 'to destroy' (cf. פּוֹר and בּוֹר), and נְפִיל, like Ass. *nablu*¹ (an epithet of Tiglath-pileser), = 'destructive.' Of מַבּוּל at any rate the original meaning seems pretty clear; it is synonymous with *nabalu*, *nabal*,² and perhaps too with *nabbálu*, and means (1) destruction, (2) wasting flood.³ I make no reference to Ar. *wabūlun* and *wābūlun* 'heavy rain' (cf. *Korán*, Sur. ii. 266, 267, and *Hamása*, p. 611, with Freytag's note), as these must be connected with another root.⁴

xxx. 4. Read מִיֹּרְדֵי (K'thib), with Sept., Pesh. The Q'ri postulates a new infin. יֹרֵד (in spite of *v.* 10), which Ol., Stade, and König, as grammarians, rightly refuse to recognise.

— 8. Read לְהַרְרֵי עוֹן (a frequent constr. form); so Targ. (comp. Ibn Ezra). So too Riehm, comparing Isa. xxxiii. 16, Job xvii. 1, and correcting הַעֲמַרְתָּנִי. Sept. (Pesh.) לְהַרְרֵי; cf. on cx. 3.

— 13. Read לְכַבּוּרֵי with Sept. (Pesh.).

xxxī. 4. Sept. ὁδηγήσεις με καὶ διαθρέψεις με. Targ. דַּבַּר יְתִי וְזוֹן יְתִי. Pesh. *bayyain* 'console me.'

¹ Cf. Schrader, *Die Keilinschriften und das A.T.* [*K.A.T.*], p. 609. Norris (*Assyrian Dictionary*) gives *naplu*; but see Sayce, *Syllabary*, 168.

² Budge, *Hist. of Esarhaddon*, p. 59.

³ Friedr. Delitzsch proposes this etymology (*Wo lag das Paradies* § p. 156), which is accepted by Haupt (in Schrader's *K.A.T.*, p. 66, n. 3); but gives too special a rendering of *nabbálu* ('the wasting storm-flood'). Cf. also Friedr. Del., *Prolegomena*, p. 122.

⁴ *Hebraica*, April 1887, pp. 175, 176.

- xxx. 7. Read שְׁנֵאתָ with Sept. (Pesh.) and Jer. (in some MSS.). So most (not Pe.).
- 10, 12. Insert נְהַלֵּה with Bi. For מָאֵד read מְנַד with La., Bi. (Hi. מְנַד). Observe נִדְדוּ in line 4.
- 20. Insert יהוה with Sept. (A, B, but not S). So Bi.
- 21. Read מְרִבְלִי (cf. Ezek. xxii. 9), with Ol., Bi. The text-reading is commonly rendered 'from conspiracies' (רַבַּם to bind): better, 'serried ranks' (Targ. גִּידוּרֵי; cf. Ass. *raksu*, Schrader, *K. A. T.*, p. 332). Hi., in his first work on the Psalms, connects with רִנּוּ (cf. Sept. ἀπὸ παραχῆς ἀνθρώπων); but this is scarcely justifiable. Both Targ. and Sept. guess.
- xxxii. 4. Read בְּחַרְבְּנֵי.
- 6. Read לְעַת מְצַר קוֹל נִשְׁטָף, with La. and virtually Bi.
- 7. רִנִּי seems like a repetition of the last letters of the preceding word; בְּלֵט occurs again in a corrupt passage (lvi. 8).
- 8. Read אֵינְעָדָה (Sept., Symm., Jer. favour this). So Ol., Bi.
- 9. Read בְּמַתְנֵי-וֶרְקָן לְבָלוֹם עַד יִבַּל אֵלָיִךְ. Surely עֲדָיו 'his trappings' cannot be in apposition to 'bit and bridle,' since these are here regarded not as ornaments, but as means of controlling the animal. בַּל before קָרוֹב (? infin.) is against usage. Hence von Ortenberg¹ (who reads as above, but retains 'ק') takes 'ק' to be a 'proleptic predicate.' It is simpler and helps the rhythm to omit it as an interpolation rendered necessary by the faulty grouping of letters בַּל עֲדָיו בַּל. But how came לְבָלוֹם where it now stands? It had been omitted by mistake, and was afterwards written in the margin, and thence inserted in a wrong place. For יִבַּל in this context, cf. lx. 11, Isa. liii. 7.
- xxxiii. 7. Read בְּנֵאֵד=בְּנֵאֵד, with Dathe, Ew., Ol., Dy., Gr., and all the versions (except Quinta in Field); but not in lxxviii. 13, in spite of Sept.
- xxxiv. 6. See note. The points give a weaker interpretation, influenced by v. 7. Note that הַבֵּיט אֵל is a synonym of בָּטַח (cf. Sept. of Isa. xx. 5, 6); the phrase must have arisen from the primitive use of sacred symbols (cf. Num. xxi. 9).
- xxxv. 2, 5, 6. See notes. Transpose participles, reading דָּחַם with Sept.
- 7, 8. Transpose שַׁחַת and רִשְׁתָּם. Omit the last three words (a gloss on v. 8 a).
- 13. Read תְּנִשִּׁיב with Bi. (cf. lxxix. 12).
- 15 b. Read נִבְרָיִם with Ol., Bi., Gr.; Riehm prefers נִשְׁבִּיִם (cf. Hab. ii. 7).
- 16. The Mass. text clearly cannot stand. We might read לְעֵנִים, taking up מ from מַעֲוֹנ, the remainder of which will then be either a clerical error or a gloss = עוֹנָה 'a jest' (but I doubt this Rabbinic word in Kimchi), or בְּלִשׁוֹן עֵנָה 'in a foreign tongue' (*Sanhedrin*, 101, 2, in Buxtorf's *Lex. Talmud.*). The versions, if they read מַעֲוֹנ, interpreted

¹ *Zur Textkritik der Psalmen* (1861), pp. 6, 7.

it as Kimchi (as a synonym of לָעַג), but it is more agreeable to usage to suppose that they read לָעַג, which I accept with Baethgen as the true reading. Are the versions in other respects reconcilable with Mass. text? It is possible that Symm., Pesh., Targ. do but guess; we cannot safely use them. Sept., however, which renders ἐπείρασάν με ἐξεμυκτήρισάν με μυκτηρισμόν, does suggest a correction for בַּחֲנִפֵי, viz. בְּהִנְיִי 'they vexed me' (strictly, 'tried me, as metals,' lxvi. 10). But, with Baethgen, I hesitate to accept this new sense, and abide by Mass. text (pointing, however, לָעַגִי). Foreign oppressors were of course תְּגַפִּים:

xxxv. 17. Read משׂאנתם with OL, Dy., Gr.

xxxvi. 2. See notes; Krochmal's נָעָם or נָעִים is too easy. Read לָבוּ, with Sept. (Pesh.), Jer., Targ. (in two eds.), and some Heb. MSS.

— 3. Omit לשׂנא—'in respect of hating' (his iniquity), a gloss defining the sense of לְמוֹצָא and consequently of the whole verse. In fact, Sept., Aq., Targ., Jer. all interpret as if the subject of the verb in l. 1 were the sinner, whose aim in his 'flattery' is to 'find' (i.e. get an opportunity for) sin, and to hate (Targ. supplies אוֹלְפָנָא 'instruction,' which casts a flood of light on the gloss). Symm. takes the opposite view; Pesh. is general and vague. On the moderns, see Pe.'s crit. note.

— 8. See note. De.'s 'explanatory Waw' is very awkward.

xxxvii. 28. The Sept. version exists in two forms, ἄωμοι ἐκδικηθήσονται (so codd. B. and S.) and ἄνομοι [δέ] ἐκδιωχθήσονται (so A. S. 2nd and 3rd correction). The latter suggests עֲנָלִים (cf. παράνομοι = עֲנָל Job xxvii. 7 Sept.); the verb is of course נִשְׁמְרוּ.

— 35. See note; Sept. and Pesh. as quoted by Aphraates agree.

— 36. Read וְאֶעֱבֹר with Sept., Pesh.; cf. Prov. xxiv. 30, and see crit. note on Isa. li. 19.

xxxviii. 12, 13. The pentastich is to compensate for a preceding tristich (vv. 6, 7). Thus the number of distichs is *virtually* 22. In v. 12 b, Gr. ויעשׂו (see on ix. 17).

— 20. Read הָנָם with Houb., Lo., Ol., Ew., Hi., Hu., Dy., Bi., Gr.

— 22, 23. The last tetrastich seems short; Bi. enlarges it from the Memphitic version of the Sept.

xxxix. 2. Read אֶשְׂמָה with Dy., Bi., Gr. (and *virtually* Ol.). אֶשְׂמָה was copied from l. 1.

— 5. Read מִהֲחִלָּה אֶנִּי 'quantilli sim ævi,' with Hu. חִלָּה occurs again in xvii. 14, xlix. 2, and (especially) lxxxix. 48. The same transposition occurs in Isa. xxxviii. 11. Possibly later scribes found a deep meaning in חִלָּה ('ceasing,' 'cessation'); cf. De., *Gesch. der jüd. Poesie*, p. 167.

— 6. Omit כל before הַבֵּל, with Aq., Symm., and many Heb. MSS. So too Pesh., unless it read כִּהְבֵּל.

— 7. בעלם. Menahem ben Saruq (Spanish school; 10th century) is right, as against Dōnâsh, when he explains the word 'צ' 'image.' But:

Dônâsh is more plausible than Mühlau and Volck (who explain 'צ' 'shadow,' i.e. 'vanity'), when he renders 'in darkness man wanders about' (see *Hebraica*, Jan. 1888, pp. 120, 121). So doubtless Ibn Janah (*Book of Roots*, s.v.), who compares Ar. *zalîma* 'to be dark.' Gr. reads 'בָּצַל מַת', which at any rate puts no violence on Hebrew usage. Darkness is an image of misfortune, not of vanity.

- xli. 2. Insert וְאֶבְיֹן with Bi., Ley (after Sept.).
 — 9. La. suggests pointing דְּבָרָה; but cf. ci. 3.
- xlii. 2. May we not plausibly correct כְּאֵילַת with Ol., Bö., Bi., Stade? The final ת would be so easily absorbed by the initial one of the next word. שׁוֹר and הַמִּזְרֵחַ have no fem. form, but אֵיל has.
 — 5. König (*Lehrgebäude*, p. 587) ingeniously defends a most improbable pointing. Surely we must read אֲדַרְבָּם with Schnurrer, Dy., Bi.; so Aq., *προβιβάζων αὐτούς* (cf. Acts xix. 33). The Piel דָּרָה 'sensim ducere' is common in the Talmud with reference to children and young animals (see Buxtorf). It looks indeed like a colloquial word; Sept. has, *ὅτι διελεύσομαι ἐν τόπῳ σκηνῆς θαυμαστῆς*,¹ whence Bredenkamp, בסך אדירים 'in the throng of nobles; ' cf. xvi. 3 (*Gesetz und Propheten*, p. 143). But the literary use of the verb is proved by Isa. xxxviii. 15 (whence Ol. here, אֲדַרְבָּה).
- 6, 7. Read פני ואלהי, with most, after Sept.
 — 7. Ol., Gr., מִהָרַר מוֹעֵד, either of the temple-mount (Ol.), or even of Hermon (Gr.). Cf. Lam. ii. 6 (not Isa. xiv. 13). But see note.
 — 11. Read בְּרָקָב with Ol., Gr. (Prov. xii. 4). רָצַח in Ezek. xxi. 27 is corrupt (see Sept.).
- xliii. 3. La., אֲוִירִיךָ וְתִמְיִךָ. But see lvii. 4. Hi. as needlessly introduces the 'Thummim' into xvi. 5.
- xliv. 3. Read תנרע with La. (cf. Isa. x. 33).
 — 10. Read אָךְ with Gr. (as lviii. 3).
- xlv. Prof. Briggs gives several original suggestions on the text in his *Messianic Prophecy*, pp. 140-143.
 — 3. Read יִפִּי יִפִּיתָ (cf. Sept.). König himself (*Lehrgebäude*, p. 584) admits that the reduplication in the received reading can only be accounted for by the influence of the idiom which expresses the superlative by repetition—the reader, in short, was intended to think of יִפִּי; how artificial!
 — 5. The last word of v. 4 has been repeated by mistake, instead of the right word (cf. on xxxix. 2). In two of Kennicott's MSS. (followed by Street) it is omitted, but this is clearly a conjecture; hence I have left a blank. Horsley, Hi., Baethgen, וְהִדְרָךְ (Sept. *καὶ ἔυτεινον*); but this is harsh.
 — Read צַדִּיק וְעֲנוּהָ with Ol. (doubtfully) and Bi.
 — 6. Insert בְּבֹרֵךְ with Sept., Kennicott, Bi.
 — 7. It is very doubtful whether a suffix can be interposed between the construct state and its genitive; Hu.'s rendering, 'Dein Thron ist ein

¹ *Θαυμαστὸς* = אֲדַרְבָּה, viii. 1, xcii. 6 (Sept.), xv. 3, lxxv. 5 (Theod.).

Gottesthron,' cannot be any longer defended; nor will Ew.'s parallel passages bear examination (cf. crit. note on lxxi. 7). Read כסאך נכונה אלהים, with Bi. Saadia (quoted by Ibn Ezra) paraphrases, 'God shall establish thy throne for ever;' &c. That there is a corruption or an omission seems to me obvious, as soon as one realises at all fully the hazards of transcription. It is not enough to show that the received text can be somehow construed; exegetical tact must speak the last word on such a point. Interesting as Dr. Hort's argument for the rendering 'God is thy throne' in Heb. i. 8 certainly is, and well as it deserves more than private circulation, it appears to me on every ground more ingenious than convincing (see Perowne, who summarises its chief points). On the grammatical interpretation of the text-reading, and on various emendations (except Bi.'s), see Driver, *Hebrew Tenses*, § 194. Kuenen's view (which agrees with Ol.'s) will be found in his *Religion of Israel*, i. 373. It had been anticipated by Street (1790). Giesebrecht's recent emendation of אלהים into יהיה (see his paper translated in *Hebraica*, Jan. 1888, p. 92, &c.) is ingenious, but the passage cited by him (2 Sam. vii. 16) is parallelistic; *v.* 7, as he would read it, is not so. Besides, 'le goût doit aussi être entendu.'

- xlv. 8. For אלהים read יהוה with Street, Bi., Kuenen, and (doubtfully) Ol. But can there be a doubt that the name of God was altered by the 'Elohistic' editor?
- 9. Read מְנִים (cf. on xviii. 44, cxliv. 2), unless we may suppose that a stroke after מְנִי originally marked the omission of the ם. See crit. note on Isa. v. 1, where the apocopated plural is surely not too decidedly rejected. The levelling process through which the O. T. has passed makes such a linguistic fact very improbable, nor can an Assyrian or Himyaritic analogy neutralise this consideration, especially if we remember the frequent corruptions of the text. Whether מְנִים is right, however, is of course questionable. The versions found no music here; and it is strange that the palace-musicians should receive such slender commemoration. Bi., in his latest corrections, reads מְנֵי הַיְכָלִי שֵׁן שׁ. This is extremely plausible; מְנֵי (the poetic form of מֵן) was written, he supposes, twice over. Curiously enough, this mistake has apparently produced a corruption of the text in lxviii. 32 (where, however, Bi. has not noticed it). I would gladly adopt Bi.'s view, but that the line seems to me obscure without a 'subject.' Has some other word—נְשָׂרִים 'singers' for instance—been supplanted by the second מְנֵי? On the older views, see Pe.'s note, and comp. Gesenius, *Thes.*; and on the meaning of מְנִים, see crit. note on cl. 4.
- 13. Read וְלָךְ בּוֹאוֹ (Bi. לָךְ). See note. 'Unto thee' is prefixed for emphasis (cf. cxxxix. 17).
- 14. Read פְּנִינִים, with Krochmal and Gr.
- xlvi. 4. For בְּהַמִּיר, Krochmal and Gr. בְּהַמּוֹן (*v.* 7 *b*). Ew. rightly restores the refrain.

- xlvi. 5. Insert **הַסֵּדוּ** with Ol., Bi. (afterwards Bi. preferred **הוּא**). In defence of the text as it stands, Baethgen compares Job iii. 6. But there the reference is clear. Here it would not be so. We must supply something, and it is not enough to do this mentally; an enigma would be intolerable. To this Baethgen replies by reading in line 2 **קָדַשׁ מִשְׁכָּנֵנוּ עֲלֵינוּ**, after Sept. 'The second verse-half,' he says, 'expresses the idea of the first without imagery, and alludes to the dangers which beset the city from its foes. These foes sought to 'pollute' Jehovah's dwelling (**חָלַל**, lxxiv. 7); but by declaring this 'holy,' the Most High has rendered vain their endeavour' (*Theol. Stud. u. Krit.*, 1880, pp. 759-761). To this I reply, that the perfect parallelism of the rest of the psalm makes such an abrupt construction in line 1 improbable; in the impassioned speech of the patriarch, abruptness is of course only to be expected.
- xlvii. 4. We need not point **יִדְבָּר** (with Bi.); the allusion in xviii. 48 is against this. See Driver (*Hebrew Tenses*, § 84β), and Hitzig on Ps. viii. 7.
- 10. In *l.* 2 the versions (except Symm., Targ.) read **עַם**; so Kimchi, Ew., Dy. 'Possibly **עַם** has dropped out' (Pe.); so Hi., Ol., La., Bi. In *l.* 4 Gr. and Bi. round the verse off with **עַל-כֵּן-אֱלֹהִים** (xcvii. 9). Briggs explains *l.* 3 thus: 'the shields of heroes from all parts of the earth are hung up in His palace.'
- xlviii. 3. The ordinary view makes **יִרְכַּתִּי צִפּוֹן** an accusative of place, which, however, is hardly natural between two nominatives. Can this inopportune reference to the northern mountain of the Elohim be genuine? Glosses began very early to be inserted; it is clear, for instance, that Jeremiah contains some which are common to the Hebrew text and Sept. Observe that when the gloss **צ' י'** was inserted the tradition of Arâlu as a name of Mount Zion had passed away (which also accounts for the pointing **אַרְיָאָל** in Isa. xxix. 1, 2). Cf. *Expositor*, 1888, pp. 22-26.
- 14. **בְּפָסְנֵי**. 'Est ἐκ τῶν ἀπαξ λεγομένων hoc verbum. Itaque per conjecturam exponitur' (De Dieu, 1648). **בְּפָסְנֵי** in Jewish Aramaic = 'to divide; ' whence some explain, 'look at them part by part' (so still Pe.); others, 'walk between them in all directions.' So De Dieu, quoting from Maimonides, where Joshua is said to have allowed a free passage between vineyards to him who 'divides' and mounts up and 'divides' and goes down (**מִפְסָנֵי וְעוֹלָה מִפְסָנֵי וְיֹרֵד**). The sense required seems, however, to be 'mark well; ' and Grätz may be right in correcting **בְּפָסְנֵי**.
- 15. Transpose **וְעוֹלָם וְעַד** and **הוּא יִנְהַנְנוּ** with Bi. De. keeps the usual arrangement, but supposes the true closing words have dropped out. Sept. gives *eis tous aiōnas*, and so Symm. *eis τὸ διηνεκές*, whence Ew. **עֲלְמוֹת** (for the usual fem. form, cf. **הַיְכָלוֹת**, Hos. viii. 14, and Ew., *Lehrbuch*, §§ 174 d, 177 d). Ley, **עַד ע'** (for metre's sake). Ibn Ezra explains = 'eternally,' **בְּמוֹ עֲלְמוֹת**. To me it seems that **עֲלְמוֹת** is a

(mutilated) musical note, standing exceptionally at the end of the psalm, or belonging properly to the title of the next psalm. It probably stands for על־עֲלֵמוֹת (as we should also read in the title of Ps. ix., and as Mass. text reads in that of Ps. xlv.).

- xlix. 'The text of the entire psalm is more than usually corrupt' (Ewald). This is too strong; but from *v.* 6 onwards the style is almost always harsh, and the text in some parts at once so difficult and so unsymmetrical that its correctness must be boldly denied.
- 5 *b.* Paraphrase, in order to reproduce the strong brevity of the original. Comp. Pesh.
- 8. Read $\eta\aleph$ (actually found in some MSS.—of course as a conjecture); other MSS. have $\eta\aleph$; the two words are elsewhere too confounded (see lviii. 3, Isa. xxxiv. 14, 15). So Ew., quoting Ezek. xviii. 10, xxi. 20, where, however, the corrupt $\eta\aleph$ is not so easily corrected. But η is probably miswritten for κ in 1 Kings ix. 7 (cf. 2 Chron. vii. 20), and κ for η in Ps. cxliii. 9. Point $\eta\aleph$.
- 10. $\eta\aleph$. The connexion of this little clause is not clear. Ewald's view is on the whole the best; an elaborate sentence is to be expected here, and if it is produced with difficulty the writer cannot be blamed: how should it be otherwise in parallelistic poetry? Hi. and Gr., however, make these words begin a new sentence; and so Prof. Briggs (*Hebraica*, April 1887, pp. 156–158), who even commences a new strophe with them. But this only involves us in fresh difficulties. First, how are we to construe the passage (*vv.* 9, 10); and next, how to explain it? Gr. boldly renders, following De Dieu (*Animadversiones*, p. 342), 'Will he go on living perpetually, (and) not see the grave?' Although he 'has seen how,' &c.; Hi., 'And though he should still live for an eternity, (and) not see the grave, he *shall* see it (the grave).' Gr., it seems, follows the syntax of De Dieu (1648). Hi. is a fine modern grammarian and subtle exegete; but would $\eta\aleph$ be the natural expression in this context (to mean simply, 'for a longer or shorter period')? Is it natural to take η here as emphatically introducing the apodosis? And does it not injure the parallelism of *v.* 11 to borrow an object for $\eta\aleph$ from *v.* 10? I see no difficulty myself in taking *v.* 9 parenthetically; the brief digression is so naturally suggested by $\eta\aleph$; but those who do find one may, with Ol., transpose *v.* 9 and *v.* 10. On the rendering 'castle' (root-meaning, 'to be high') see note in *Isaiah*, ii. 172–3. The Assyriological *data* seem undeniable.
- 12. Read $\eta\aleph$ with Ol., Riehm, Dy., Bi.; Dathe, Ew., Gr., and virtually Pe. adopt $\eta\aleph$ from Sept., Pesh., Targ. The insertion of $\eta\aleph$ (or some other suitable verb) restores symmetry and relieves the construction; it is due to Bi. In my view of $\eta\aleph$ I follow Hi., who appeals to *vv.* 14 *b*, 19 *b*, as suggesting that the $\eta\aleph$ are not the rich men themselves. For the sense 'spoke with honour,' see my note on Isa. xii. 4 (the phrase could, of course, be used of

any one of high rank). It is against A.V.'s interpretation (adopted by Pe.) that it is not אֲדַמְתִּיהֶם but אֲדַמּוֹת; the ambiguity of the phrase אֲרַצוֹת=אֲרָצוֹת makes the suffix indispensable. אֲרַצוֹת=אֲרָצוֹת.

xlix. 13. See note. Ew. follows Sept. But if the negative particle is different in the two forms of the refrain, why should not the verb be different too?

— 15. צִירִים (K'thib) or צִוּרִים (Q'ri)? Many MSS. and editions have the latter. There is no difference in the sense; for we can hardly with Symm. and (probably) Sept. take צִוּר in its usual sense of 'rock' ('their rock' would not 'waste away,' but suddenly disappear; cf. Isa. xxxi. 9). צִיר and צִוּר both presuppose the verb צִוּר, a collateral form of יָצַר, common in Jewish Aramaic. The expression is a suggestive one; one thinks who it was that 'formed' these once glorious frames; as Job says, 'Thy hands have formed me (Targ. יָרְךָ צִירֵנִי) and made me; afterwards dost thou turn and destroy me?' (Job x. 8.) In two words the strange antithesis is conveyed—creation and destruction. The psalm of course is late, though not as late as Ps. cxxxix.

— The transposition (Hu., Bi., Briggs) somewhat relieves the difficulty of the verse. Of course מְזַבֵּל לוֹ is impossible. Ew., Hi., and Riehm point מְזַבֵּל; but, as we have elsewhere found single letters remaining out of a nearly effaced text, so it seems to be here. With Hi. I venture to correct לֹא מְזַבֵּל לוֹ [לְעוֹלָם]; cf. *v.* 12 *a.* Krochmal simply reads זָבַל.

— 20. Read יָבוֹא with Sept. (Pesh.), Bö., Dy., Gr., Bi. (Pe. and De Witt render 'he shall come'). Note the preceding 2 sing. fem.

l. 1. Aq., Symm., and Theod., according to some authorities, omit κύριος (which occurs nowhere else in this psalm), rendering simply ἰσχυρὸς θεός; Sept. has, θεὸς θεῶν κύριος. The accentuation, however, implies three names of God, which the Midrash distinctly affirms. Calvin follows Sept., but Clément Marot, in his beautiful Huguenot Psalter, renders—

Le Dieu, le fort, l'Éternel parlera,
Et haut et clair la terre appellera.

May I add that this fine rendering, sung by Dr. Perowne's ancestors, ought to have inclined him in favour of the view which it implies? Besides, 'the God of gods' would surely be, not אֱלֹהִים, but אֱלֹהֵי הָאֱלֹהִים or אֱלֹהֵי אֱלֹהִים, as De. remarks.

— 7. The Elohistic editor's avoidance of the name 'Jehovah' (Yahveh) produces an odd result here (cf. xlv. 7). Read יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי (as in Ex. xx. 2, to which there is an allusion).

— 10. Read אֱלֹהֵי (Ol., Bi.); see note. It is well known that errors in manuscripts sometimes arise from the insertion (e.g. Prov. xv. 4 *b*, K'thib) or addition (e.g. Isa. liii. 8 Sept.) of intrusive letters.

— 23. Read וְהָם with Gr. (who, however, wrongly claims Symm.) and Geiger. A scribe may have thought that הָם was an intrusive neo-

- logism (תם = שם in late Hebrew). Or he may simply have misread; ש and ת seem confounded in the Mass. text of Isa. lxiv. 4 (cf. Sept.). There is no need to correct וְשִׁמְרָה (cf. on lxxxv. 14).
- li. 10. Read תִּשְׁבִּיעֵנִי with Pesh., Bruston, Baethgen.
- lii. 6. Insert מְזֻמּוֹת, or the like. Similarly Bi.
- 9. Read בְּהוֹנֵנוּ with Pesh., Targ., La., Gr., Bi., Baethgen (cf. cxii. 3a).
- 11. Read וְאַחֲזֶנָּה with Gr. (similarly Dy., Bi.).
- liii. For a comparison of this text and that which forms Ps. xiv., see Ewald's and Hitzig's commentaries, and Merx, *Hiob*, lv. Certainly the ordinary hazards of transcription will account for the reading עֲצֻמוֹת (v. 6). See Ezek. xxiv. 5, where הַעֲצָמִים is corrupted from הָעֲצָמִים (cf. v. 10, where Vulg. has *ossa*, but Mass. text correctly הָעֲצָמִים).
- lv. 3. In spite of König's insistence, I doubt the root הוּם (see lxxvii. 4).
- 4. Insert גְּדוּפּוֹת 'reproachful words' with Bi., and for עֵקֶת read צֵעֵקֶת with Ol., Dy., Gr., Bi.
- 9. Sept. Προσεδεχόμενον τὸν σώζοντά με ἀπὸ ὀλιγοψυχίας καὶ καταγίδος. So Pesh., but avoiding the charming mistake ἀπὸ ὀλιγοψ. Read לִי אֲחִילָה לְמַפְלֵט לִי¹ (cf. Ewald, *Lehrbuch*, § 282 c).
- 10. Gr. reads בְּלָל. This stem, however, does not occur. Barth supposes a root בלע 'to confound' (*Beiträge zur Erklärung des Jesaja*, 1885, p. 4). For סָעָה read סוּפָה, with Hu., Gr., Bi. (cf. lxxiii. 16).
- 16. The Q'ri מְוֵת (יִשְׂיָא) יִשְׂיָא is supported by most MSS., including the best Spanish, and, above all, by the versions. See König, *Lehrgebäude*, p. 635. There is, however, a difficulty in the following word עֲלִימוֹ; it is not ungrammatical to render, 'Let Death beguile [them, and break in] upon them,' but certainly harsh. The K'thib gives an easier construction, but יִשְׂמוֹת only occurs elsewhere in the name of a place, and 'desolations' is not the word one expects here. Considering that other passages of this psalm are mutilated, it is not at all bold to adopt Brüll's correction יִבְלִימוֹ.
- Insert מְזֻמּוֹת תּוֹעֵבָה (or the like) with Bi. Most explain בְּקִרְבָּם 'in their heart,' a forced climax.
- 20. Insert צֵעֵבֶת עֲגִיִּים with Ol., Bi. (cf. next line). In *l.* 2 Sept., Pesh., Jer. favour the reading ויענמו (Kuenen, *De.*, Dy., Bi.), though rendering as Piel ('humble'). Note the two Paseqs; if the first is to guide recitation, the second must surely mark a lacuna.
- 22. Read with Bi. מַחֲמַאת (for this archaic termination, see Ol., *Lehrbuch*, p. 202), or, with Dathe and Pe., מַחֲמָא. The versions all understood the prefix to be prepositional. Is *De.*'s rendering of the Mass. text at all probable? For פִּיּוּ, Sept. favours פִּנְיּוּ (see Grätz, *Psalmen*, p. 140); but *l.* 3 will not then be fully parallel. Symm. τὰ στόματα; Targ. פּוּמְיָה.

¹ Why not מְפַלְטִי (as xviii. 2)? To produce a more solemn movement (so perhaps in cxliv. 2; see note). Bi. in his supplementary leaflet reads לִי אֲלֵהִים מְפַלֵּט לִי, appealing to Lucian's recension of Sept. At any rate, a large number of MSS. in Holmes and Parsons give τὸν θεὸν τὸν σώζ. με.

- lvi. 2, 3; lvii. 4. 'Non **שָׁפַד** sed **שָׁפַד** poeta voluerat' (La.).
 — 4. La., **יּוֹם אָיִד** (Job xxi. 30); Hu. **יּוֹם אָקָרָא** (v. 10).
 — 6. Read **בְּדַבָּר** 'with words' (cf. Job xv. 3, and perhaps Isa. xxix. 21). **בְּעֵצָב** is specially used of words that hurt (cf. Prov. xv. 4).
 — 7; lix. 4. Read **יְגוֹדֵד** (xciv. 21) with Ibn Ezra in the first passage. Cf. my note on Hos. vii. 14. It is less natural to take **נֹוֹר** in the Ass. sense 'to be hostile,' 'to revolt,' or in the Arabic 'to be unjust, tyrannical' (though in the latter case the prep. would suit). In *l.* 3 La., Bi., very plausibly, **בְּאֵרֵי יְקוּוֹ**.
 — 8. Hu., Riehm, Dy., Pe., Bi. correct **בְּלָלָם**, 'For (their) iniquity weigh to them' (viz. retribution), following Ew., who compares lviii. 3 (where, however, there is no ellipsis of the object).
 — 9. The versions are suggestive. Targ. agrees with Mass. text. Symm.'s second *ἔδου σου* should surely be *ἐνώπιόν σου* (cf. Jer., who agrees with Symm. in *l.* 1). Sept. is the most striking—*τῆν ζωήν μου ἐξήγγελά σοι, ἔθου τὰ δάκρυά μου ἐνώπιόν σου, ὡς καὶ ἐν τῇ ἐπαγγελίᾳ σου*. The closing words may be fitly disregarded; but those who will may follow Sept.'s text of lines 1 and 2. **שְׂמַתָּה רַמְעַתִּי לַנְּרָךְ** [לְךָ] **סְפַרְתִּי**.¹ I have followed Sept. partly in *l.* 1, but do not insist on לְךָ (see next note). The last line, as Bi. points out, is a gloss (cf. on xvi. 3).
 — 10 *b.* Insert **אֵלֶיךָ** with Sept.; so Bi. (At any rate, the sense is incompletely given without it.)
 — 11. Read **דְּרָבְרוּ** with Hu., Dy., Bi.
 — 14. Insert **הַשִּׁבְתָּ** with Ol., Bi.
 lvii. 3. Perhaps read **נִמְלָל** with Gr., Bi. (Sept.).
 — 4. Hi. emends **הַרְרָה** into **כִּיבְרָה** (Ps. lxxi. 4 *b.*). Sept. *ἔδωκεν εἰς ὄνειδος τοὺς καταπατοῦντάς με*—if a guess, at any rate a happy one.
 — 5. Read **שָׁבְנָה** (cxx. 6).
 — 6, 7. These verses should have been transposed (so Ley). The three parts of the psalm will then be more symmetrical, and the 'Selah' in the Mass. text will then be sure to be justified (comp. the three 'Selahs' in Ps. xlvi.). The sense, too, is improved by correcting *v.* 6 and *v.* 7.
 — 7. Read **כַּפְפוּ**, with Gr., Bi. (Sept.).
 lviii. 2. Read **אָלָם** with Houb., Ew., Ol., De., Geiger, Dy., Gr., Bi.
 — 3. For **רָאָה** read **רָאָה** with Gr. (cf. *v.* 12), and for **בְּלָבָב** read **בְּלִבָּם** with Pesh. (not Sept.), Ol., La., Gr., Baethgen. Total depravity is always a feature in such descriptions (see Pss. xii., xiv.).
 — 8 *b.* Read **כִּמוֹ חֲצִיר מֵהָרָה יִתְמַלְלוּ** (so Bi., but reading **יִתְמַלְלוּ**). Cf. xc. 6. An allusion to xxxvii. 2, 'Hic versus in quodam codice archetypo fere illegibilis evasit, ita ut vestigia literarum quasi divinando ad sensum novum contorta sint' (Bi.).

¹ I can hardly think that *τῆν ζ. μου* is a mere half-rendering of **נָדִי** 'my wandering.' Elsewhere, it is true, the Sept. Psalter renders **חָלַךְ** by *γῆ, οἰκουμένη, and ὑπόστασις*, but in Sept. Job xi. 17 *ζωή* is obviously the equivalent of **חָלַךְ**, and I assume it to be so here.

- lviii. 10. Sept., Symm., Jer. presuppose the Mass. text. Targ. renders, עַד דְּהִינֵנוּ רְטִיבִין עַד דְּהִינֵנוּ בְּבוֹסְרָא (בְּבֹסְרָא, בְּעֵלְעוּלָא וְיִשְׁצִינֵנוּ; Baethgen rightly remarks that this gives a duplicate rendering for חַי כְּמוֹ חַי (but why add, or for כמו חרון?). But I cannot see how בעל suggests the reading חרון; surely it goes with 'יש' as an equivalent of ישערנו. Besides, חרון never means flame, but always the divine wrath. But Targ.'s witness to בשר is useful. Read בְּשֶׁרְכֶם with Bi., who also inserts וְעוֹד and יהוה. The last word is *perhaps* unnecessary (see Neh. xiii. 18); at any rate, I prefer יה, which some translators, and presumably scribes, out of excessive reverence, ignored¹ (cf. Jer. ii. 31. Sept., Pesh.; Pss. lxxxix. 9, cxxx. 3. Pesh.). Cf. Dillmann on Ex. xv. 2, who holds that יה only occurs in late poetry, 'except in Isa. xxxviii. 11' (but surely the Psalm of Hezekiah is late, as I at least have maintained since 1880).
- lix. 10. Read עוֹי אֹמְרָה (as *v.* 18). Most agree as regards עוֹי (so also Sept., and virtually Pesh.; also Targ., Jer., and some MSS.).
- 11. Adopt K'thib; so Sept. Cf. xxi. 4.
- 12 *c.* La., after Pesh., וְהִנְדָּמוּ (cf. Gen. iv. 12).
- lx. 6 *b.* La. corrects שְׁמָה. But surely קִשְׁט is an Aramaising form of קִשָּׁת. So Sept., Pesh., Jer. Prefix אָה (for we can hardly insert the negative particle, with Pesh.).
- 8 *a.* La. corrects אֶעֱנֶה.
- 10. Point עָלִי with Targ., Pesh., Hu., and הִתְרוּעֵעִי with Hu. (Ps. cviii. 9 gives the true sense.)
- 11. Read יִנְחֵנִי (the perfect, though defensible, is less natural) with Ol. (a good grammarian) and Bi. Notice the preceding.
- lxi. 6. Read אֲרִשֶׁת with Krochmal and Bi. (xxi. 3).
- lxii. 2. Read דְּמִי, as *v.* 6 (Baer), with Bi., Gr.
- 3. Omit רְבֵה with Bi. (cf. *v.* 7); it seems to be a gloss upon עַד־אֲנֶה, meaning 'long enough,' like רְבַת in cxx. 6, &c.
- 4 *a.* Read תְּהוֹלֵלָנִי (cf. cii. 9) with Hu. Cf. וְאֵל for וְאֵל, Judg. xix. 18 (cf. Sept.). Point תְּרַצְחוּ with Pathakh (Ben-Naftali's reading), not with Qameç (Ben Asher's). This is expressed by most of the versions.
- 9. Sept., ἐπίστανε ἐπ' αὐτὸν, πᾶσα συναγωγὴ λαοῦ. Note the Paseq, which here indicates a lacuna. In two other places where a ד has been dropped (1 Kings ix. 18, Dan. ii. 9) a blank space was left; here the lacuna is indicated by a Paseq (Baethgen). So Bi.
- 11. Read בְּעֵקֶשׁ וּבְגִלְזֵי. So La., Gr.
- lxiii. 2. Symm. and Pesh., כְּאַרְיֵן (cxliii. 6); so Gr. Cf. De.'s foot-note on xxxii. 4.
- 3. Read אֲוִיתִיד with Gr. (cf. Isa. xxvi. 9). At first sight 'הו' seems supported by xxvii. 4; but לחזות in that passage corresponds to לראות here.

¹ See Geiger (*Urschrift*, pp. 274-8), who remarks, however, that the Greek prophetic books and the Hagiographa do not show this characteristic. This makes *against* the insertion. I have therefore used round and not square brackets.

- lxiii. 5. For בתיי La. reads בציה (as *v.* 2).
- lxiv. 7. The consonants of the text are most naturally pointed תַּמְנוּ (1st pers. plur.). The punctuators, however, failing to realise the dramatic character of the passage, invented the non-form תַּמְנוּ. They wished to approximate as near as they could to תַּמְנוּ, which in fact Hu. and Pe. believe to be correct (cf. Sept. ἐξέλιπον). Certainly in Lam. iii. 22 תַּמְנוּ must be corrected into תַּמְנוּ; for the intrusive נ, cf. Isa. xxiii. 11, where read with Knobel and Bredekamp מְעַנֶּיךָ. Both these readings being open to us, which is the more effective? Surely the former; for the sudden introduction of speakers comp. ii. 3. De. regards תַּמְנוּ as put for תַּמוּ 'one of those linguistic peculiarities in which the psalmists delight when depicting the sinful courses of the ungodly.' There speaks the philosopher, not the philologist! On my side are Kimchi and Gesenius. Comp., however, König, *Lehrgebäude*, p. 323, and Schnurrer's note (*Animadversiones*, pp. 142-147). The former explains the נ in תַּמְנוּ as compensative for Dagesh, against which see Pe.'s crit. note; the latter adopts the too easy (*conjectural*) reading of many MSS., תַּמְנוּ.
- Insert, with Bi., יֵאמרו, חקר, and אדם.
- lxv. 2. Point דוֹמִיָּה (as virtually R. Jehuda Hayug of Fez'), i.e. either *σιωπῶσα* (Aq.), or *silens* (Jer.; *v.l. silet*), or *πρέπει* (Sept.). The latter suits best (see note), unless 'is silent' could mean 'awaiteth,' as Calvin (after Kimchi) takes it. That נֹאוֹה is used for *πρέπει* in xxxiii. 1 is no proof that 'ד cannot mean this here. נִשְׁנָה, for instance, generally = דָּמָה 'to be like,' but in Esth. iii. 8 and probably i. 22 (see *Var. Bible*) it means 'to be suitable.' *It is important to notice that neither here, nor in xxii. 2, xxxix. 3, lxii. 2, is such a word as דוֹמִיָּה recognised by Sept. and Pesh.*
- 6. Read אַיִים (as Gr.; cf. Targ.), or נַיִים (as Weir; cf. Pesh.).
- lxvi. 12. Read לְרִוְחָה with Houb., Ew., Hi., Hu., Dy., Gr.
- 20. Insert מֵאֵתוֹ and וְלֹא חֵשֶׁךְ חִסְדוֹ with Bi., developing Ol.'s suggestion.
- lxviii. 3. Read הַנְּדָף or נְדָף with Ol., Stade. So distinctly Targ., Symm., and paraphrastically Sept., and two other versions in Field. Bi. adopts the former; so also Pont,² who also corrects the abnormal הַנְּדָף into מִפְּנֵי רוּחַ. The latter emendation is bold, but is at any rate better than that of the ancient versions, which seem to have read יְנַדְּמוּ (so Gr.), contrary to the parallelism. The text is certainly corrupt.
- 5. בִּיָּה and שָׁמוֹ are both suspicious; the one because a *Beth essentia* here would be unparalleled (cf. Ex. vi. 3), and the other because שָׁמוֹ occurs in line 1, and may so easily have been repeated by mistake. Krochmal corrects ב' ש' into הַשָּׁמוֹם (following Targ.'s inter-

¹ *Two Treatises on Verbs, &c.*, edited and translated by Rev. J. W. Nutt (1870), p. 73. He groups 'ד with יוֹפִיָּה, הוֹמוִיָּה, &c., remarking that 'ד has ך for ך.

² See his *Exegetisch-kritische Studie* on the psalms (Leiden, 1877).

- pretation of ערבות; Reifmann, Dy., and Hilgenfeld¹ correct בָּיָה שְׁמָחִי (inverting the proper order). I follow Gr.'s correction of בִּיה into בָּרְכוּ (cf. xcvi. 2). The versions do not help us. Sept., Pesh., Targ. do not express בָּ. Symm., διὰ τοῦ 'IA'; Quinta (in Field), ἐν τῷ 'IA'.
- lxviii. 7. Read מְשִׁיב, with La., Hilg., Bi., Pont.
 — 9, 10. Insert נָזַל (cf. Judg. v. 5). So virtually Gr., Bi. Also עֲנִיָּה and אֶרֶץ צִיָּה (Bi.).
 — 11. Sept., Pesh., τὰ ζῶα σου. Bi. and Hilg. point accordingly.
 — 15. Insert כְּמוֹ הַשְּׁלֵג (Bi.). La. corrects, בְּהַר הַשְּׁלֵג = 'on Hermon' (cf. Jos. *Ant.* xii. 3, 3).
 — 18. Read בָּא מֵשׁ (Pott, Ol., Hu., Pe., Dy., Brüll, Bi., Hilg., Pont). For the unexpressed א cf. Gen. xxx. 11, 1 Chron. ii. 24.
 — רבֹּתִים. The Dual here perhaps indicates multitude, like שְׁבַעֲתִים, as Kautzsch (in review of Grill); cf. Gesenius, *Lehrbuch* (ed. Kautzsch), § 97, 3.
 — שְׁנִין = שְׁנָאן. The confusion of the radical א with ו or י is Aramaic (Land²); in Hebrew itself a similar confusion of these letters is observable (see crit. note on Isa. li. 19). Sept., ἐθνηνοῦτων = שְׁנָאן (Sept., cxxiii. 4); Aq. ἡθούτων, and Symm. 'vociferantium' = שְׁנָאן (Sept., lxxv. 8). Hilg. accepts the first view, Baethgen the second; comp. Jer. xlvi. 45. La. and Bi. correct, יִשְׂרָאֵל (Num. x. 36).
 — 19. The versions confirm the Mass. text. though Pesh. (not for a dogmatic reason, as in vii. 12, but to make sense) inserts a negative in the second verse-half, as if it read לֹא לִשְׁכֵן. Land actually follows this reading, correcting אָה (with many MSS. he drops the ו) into אָה, and reading בְּיָד (cf. 1 Sam. xxi. 14) for בָּיָה. But, as Land himself observes, לשְׁכֵן reminds us at once of יִשְׁכֵן (v. 17; cf. Isa. lvii. 15, שְׁכֵן עַד; see also lxxxv. 10); and if we keep to the text, Pe.'s rendering is relatively the best, 'yea, even the rebellious (shall be) for the dwelling of Jah;' so Sept. καὶ γὰρ ἀπειθοῦντες τοῦ κατασκαρῶσαι (comp. Aq., Symm.). And why not follow this? (1) Because it is Jehovah's spirit, not Jehovah, which 'dwells within' men (Isa. lxiii. 11), (2) because in v. 17 the verb 'to dwell (or, abide)' is used absolutely, and (3) because such a construction and such a sense mar the parallelism of the verse. Transposition (which is so often required in ancient texts) is the easiest and least arbitrary remedy (cf. Ol., Bi.). Hi. virtually agrees, construing, 'Thou didst go up, &c., to dwell there, God Jah.'
 — 21. Omit אֲרָנִי with La., Bi., Hilg. (Sept. only τοῦ Κυρίου). A correction of יְהוָה, due to a too scrupulous scribe.
 — 22. For שְׁעָרַי, Krochmal and Gr. רִשְׁעָי.
 — 24. תְּמַחֵן was perhaps miswritten under the influence of יְמַחֵן in v.

¹ 'Die Schlacht bei Issos im Alten Testament,' *Zeitschr. für wiss. Theologie*, 1887, p. 91, &c.

² 'Drie Psalmen (68, 120, 133) verklaart,' *Theologisch Tijdschrift*, 1872, p. 540, &c.

22. Read *תרחץ* (cf. lviii. 11) with Hi. (formerly), Ol., Bö., Hu., Pe., Dy., Bi., Grill, Pont, Briggs. In sense Sept., Pesh., Targ. agree. Less probably Krochmal, Hi., Gr. (developing a hint of Kimchi's), *תַּחֲמִץ*.¹ To defend Mass. text by the Ass. *makhaçu* = *balātu* (בלל),² is hopeless. At the end of the verse Grill reads,³ *מִיָּאֲבִים מְנָהוּ* ' (the tongue of thy dogs) who are longing after some of it.' But *יָאֲב* (an Aramaic loan-word) does not occur in Piel, and in cxix. 131 it goes with *ל*. We may at least correct *מְנָתוּ* (lxiii. 11), with Ol., Dy., Bi. Saad. and R. Yepheth (cf. on v. 31 *ב*) agree in sense. It is too bad to find here the old word *מִן* 'part' (see on cl. 4).

lxviii. 27. Sept., Pesh., Jer. express the plural, whence Brüll *מִמְקָרָאִי* (he wrote in 1885); Hilg. and Pont prefer *מִמְקָרָא*. I do not see how to defend the text as commonly explained. Street (1790) reads *מִמְקָרָא*, as a title of Jehovah.

— 28. *שָׁם* 'thereupon.' *רָדָם* (i.e. 'in a deep sleep'; Sept. *ἐν ἐκστάσει*) is a puzzle. The context suggests the rendering of Moses Mendelssohn, 'Hier Benjamin, der jüngste, führet sie an' (cf. Ewald, 'als ihr Führer'); but how can this be proved philologically? as Schnurrer rightly asks. The latter would read *רָדָם*; cf. xlii. 5 (*Animadversiones*, p. 308). Far better Grill, Hilg., and Pont, *קָדָם* (cf. v. 26). In *l*. 2, read *רִנְשָׁתָם* (cf. lv. 15, lxiv. 3), with Hu., Pe. (altern.), Bi. 'רִנְמ' could only mean 'a heap of stones' (cf. *מְרִנְמָה*, Ar. *rajmat*) or (cf. the proper name 'Regem'⁴ and Ar. *rajm*) 'friendship,' or (cf. Ass. *ragānu* 'to cry out,' Haupt in Schrader, *K.A.T.*, p. 517) 'outcry.'

— 29. Point *עֲוֹנָה אֱלֹהִים*, with versions, and most moderns (*sv*. 30–32 are the basis of a *prayer*). On *עֲוֹנָה* see König, *Lehrgebäude*, p. 363. The versions (except Targ.) take it transitively.

— 31 *ב*. Matthes, as reported by Pont (p. 93), acutely corrects, and we read (cf. Isa. xvi. 8). Line 3 is the hardest in the verse. May we read *בְּבַצְרֵי־כֶסֶף* (or, see Judg. v. 19, *בְּבַצְעָב*)? *רַפֶּשׁ* = mire, Isa. lvii. 20; cf. *רַפֶּשׁ*, Ezek. xxxiv. 18, &c. *ב* must be *Beth pretii*. R. Yepheth the Karaite (10th cent.), in his Arabic translation, explains, 'trodden down for delight in silver.' De Rossi (*Var. Lect.*, iv. 47, 48) quotes *כִּבְצָרִי* (Kenn., 133); one remembers that in Job xxii. 25 *בְּצָרִים* is parallel to *כֶּסֶף*. Street renders, '. . . that marched for pieces of silver;'; Bö., 'alles was sich tummelt um Silberstücken;'; Grill, 'Das Schilfthier schreck . . . mit Silberhagelschlag' (lit., with silver-white hailstones)! In *l*. 4 we must point *בְּצָר* or *בְּזָר* with Sept., Pesh., Jer., and most moderns.

— 32. Read *הִשָּׁם* with Hilg., Pont, and the versions. The three addi-

¹ On similar suggestions of the Rabbis see Grätz, *Monatsschrift*, 1861, p. 21, &c.

² So Friedr. Delitzsch, *Prolegomena eines neuen hebr.-aram. Wörterbuchs* (1886), pp. 69–71.

³ See his monograph on this psalm (1883), and cf. review by Kautzsch in *Theol. Lit.-Zeitung*, March 22, 1884.

⁴ Dr. J. H. Hall (*Hebraica*, Oct. 1885, p. 7) finds a proper name Regn(an) in a Phœnician inscription from Cyprus in the Cesnola collection.

- tional letters in Mass. text are in fact due to 'dittography' (see next word). Some support the text-reading by the obscure family-name Hasmonæan (הַשְּׂמוֹנִיאַי)! But this is perhaps from Hesmon (הֶשְׂמוֹן), Josh. xv. 27.
- lxviii. 33. Sept. prefixes *ψάλατε τῷ Θεῷ*; hence Ley repeats, זמרו אדני.
- 36. The two corrections (יהוה, and suff. 3rd sing. masc.) are both obvious; with 'thy sanctuary' we seem to need אתה (cf. Isa. xlv. 15). Possibly the second person implies a Messianic interpretation; cf. cx. 1, 2 (Grill).
- lxix. 5. Read מעצמותי (or מעצמי), with Pesh., Ol., Hu., Dy., Bi. (originally), partly for the parallelism, partly to avoid tautology. After this, correct אָנֹכִי into אָנִי = 'I, the innocent sufferer;'; cf. אֲתָה (v. 6) = 'Thou, the pitying God.' So La. Symmetry and the connexion are both gainers by Bi.'s suggestion that l. 3 has fallen out of the text.
- 11. Sept. reads *καὶ συνέκαμψα*, Pesh. *mak'keth*, i.e. וְאַמְכָּה, from מכה = כָּה (cvi. 43). So at least La., and virtually Michaelis (*Castelli Lexicon*, p. 497). I would rather read וְאַעֲנֶה (xxxv. 13), which we may either (Bö.) insert after וואבכה or (Dy., Bi., Gr.) substitute for it. Ol. led the way in sanctioning the alternatives. Pe.'s note explains the subtleties by which the most improbable text-reading is supported.
- 21. Weir, וְאָנֹשׁ הוּא קָנָה (*Academy*, 1870, p. 257); cf. Jer. xvii. 9. For a lighter movement and more symmetry, I prefer Bi.'s correction, וואנושה מכת נפשי; cf. Jer. xv. 18.
- 27. With Sept., read יִסְפְּיוּ (Ew., Ol., Gr., Bi.). The text-reading may be defended exegetically by lxxi. 10, and grammatically by ii. 7 (if at least אֵל be correct).
- lxxi. 3. See note. Targ. also reads מעוון. Cf. xc. 1, xci. 9.
- 6. Thrupp would read גָּתִי, as xxii. 10. But Sept., if *σκαπαστής* may be corrected (so De.) to *έκσπαστής*, probably read גָּוִי in both passages (in xxii. 10 it gives *ὁ έκσπάσας με*). Targ. too gives a similar rendering (a vague one, from נָכַף 'exire') in both places. R. Yepheth, 'he that cut me off' (root, *qaf'a* = קָצַץ).
- 7. מְחִסֵּי עוֹ. Ol. and Bi. question the text, but there is ample evidence for the accusative of definition which is used here, because מְחִסֵּי עוֹ would have been misleading. Sept. indeed takes י: to be the connecting sound (*Bindelaut*), rendering *βοηθὸς κραιαῖος*, but Symm. recognises the true meaning. Without the suffix we should require לִי. On the idiom, see especially Philippi, *Wesen und Ursprung des St. Constr.*, p. 13, and Driver, *Hebrew Tenses*, § 193.
- 10. La. reads אָרְבוּ, which is doubtless stronger. We seem to want רָע לִי (as xli. 6).
- 13. Read יִבְלְמוּ, with Pesh. and a few MSS., Ol., Hu., Dy., Bi., Gr. Cf. xxxv. 4, 26; xl. 15.
- 16. אָבוּא ב', 'i.e. proferam fortitudines,' &c. (De Dieu). Cf. the

Arabic idiom *jā'a bi* 'he came with' = 'he brought' (*Korān*, iv. 45).
Sept. attaches יהוה to line 2 ; Ley (for metrical reasons) omits it.

lxxii. 5. Read וַיֵּאָרֶיךָ with La., Baethgen, and Brüll. (Sept. καὶ συμ-
παρμενεῖ.) Cf. Eccles. vii. 15.

— 6. Read יִרְיֶה (Hu., Bi.). Krochmal, ירעיה.

— 9. Read צָרִים (Ol., Hu., Dy., Bi.).

— 10 ; xcvi. 1. אַיִם. Perowne and De Witt retain the rendering
'isles' in both places (so Sept. νῆσοι) ; Briggs only in the former,
unconsciously, perhaps, following Targ., which renders in lxxii. 10
יַמֵּי יָמֵא (νῆσοι θαλάσσια), but in xcvi. 1 גְּנֻן (Buxtorf renders this 'insulæ',
but it is clearly connected with the common Assyrian word *nagū* 'a
district'). That far-off regions are meant, is obvious in most of the
passages in which the word occurs ; 'islands' limits the sense too
much. Did Sept. and Targ. really mean 'islands' by νῆσοι and
ניסין? In Isa. xx. 6 they use these words in the sing. for אִי, where
'island' cannot possibly be the sense intended. See on Isa. xl. 15,
and (crit. note) xlii. 15. The occurrence of this word is an index of
date.

— 12. Sept., Pesh., Jer., מִשׁוּעַ.

— 16, 17. Bi.'s insertions (partly supported by Sept.) justify themselves.
So in part Ley. In *l.* 1 read שִׁפְעָה (La., Gr.).

lxxiii. 4. Read לָמוֹ תָם ; so Moerlius (1737), Street, Ew., Hi., Bö., Ol.,
De. תָם in a physical sense, as תָם Job xxi. 23, תָמִים, Prov. i. 12.
See, however, Pe.'s thorough but too hesitating note.

— 7. Read עֹנְמוֹ (Schnurrer, Hi., Ew., Ol., De., Bi.). So Sept.

— 8. The verse-division is that of all the versions (except Symm.), and
of Street, Bö., Klostermann, Bi.

— 10. Read וְשָׁבִיעֵמוֹ לָחֶם with La. (similarly Houëb., Gildemeister, &c.).
Had we a right to render לָבֶן 'nevertheless' (Gesenius), this would
make excellent sense. In *l.* 2 read יִמְצֵוֹ or יִמְצֵוֹ (Gr.).

— 18. For לָמוֹ La. reads רַגְלָמוֹ.

— 25 *a.* Targ. supplies 'but thee ;' Pesh. transfers עִמְךָ from *b.*

— 28. La., נִפְלְאוֹתֶיךָ ; cf. lxxv. 2.

lxxiv. 4, 5. Woods omits אֶתְּוֹת וְיֹדֵעַ as interpolated from *v.* 9, where
he takes עֶרְמָה to be also interpolated (*Hebraica*, July 1887, p. 261).

— 6. Sept., Symm., בְּתַחֲתֶיהָ.

— 8. אֵין מִיָּנֵם might mean 'the whole clan of them' (Sept. συγγένεια) ; i.e.
no quarter given. But is not a verb required? Let us say, נִשְׁבִּיתָם
(so possibly Sept., if we may hold that ἡ συγγ. αὐτ. and καταπαύσωμεν
are renderings of rival readings,¹ or נִבְחִירָם (cf. lxxxiii. 4), or (as
Brüll) נִצִּיתָם. We have no right to emend Sept.'s καταπανσ. into
κατακανσ. (after Symm.).

— 11. The text-reading destroys the parallelism. Read, וּמִיָּנֵךְ בְּקֶרֶב, וְהָקֵד תִּבְלָא
(Bi.).

¹ Pesh. favours this view by giving *naubēd* 'let us destroy' twice over. I suspect
that the Sept. translator had before him a mutilated form of the text.

- lxxiv. 14. Read simply צִיִּים (see crit. note on Isa. xxxii. 1, with Hu., La.).
- 19. (1) Shall we transpose הֵיִת and נִפְשׁ (Hu.)? This is an easy remedy;¹ but נִפְשׁ in the sense of 'greed,' 'passion,' should be in construction with another noun (see xxvii. 12, xli. 3). (2) La. (after Targ.) would read לְהֵיִת שֵׁן, 'to beasts with teeth' (a poetical phrase for lions; see lviii. 7). Cf. Deut. xxxii. 24; Ezek. v. 17. But is it likely that הֵיִת bears two senses in the same verse? Surely 'ה' in line 1 either means 'life' (as Hu.), or else it is a scribe's mistake. (3) I would therefore correct either לְמוֹת (Schrader), with לְשֵׁהָ (Krochmal) for an alternative—see xvi. 10—or more suitably לְהַרְבֵּ (cf. lxxviii. 62).
- 20. For הַנְּאוֹת read גְּאוֹת with Bi. (originally), who, however, now simply omits נְאוֹת, without accounting for its presence in the text, and in *l.* 1 reads בְּרִיתֶךָ. The latter certainly seems wanted, if (as Hu., De., Pe., &c., suppose) the 'ב' is Jehovah's covenant with Abraham or with Israel at Sinai. My explanation, however (which is also that of Ew. and Hi.), is the more natural one in this context; it is supported by Syr. *qyōmō*, which means not only 'a contract,' but 'a society bound together by oaths' (*Eidgenossenschaft*); see G. Hoffmann, *Verhandlungen der Kirchenversammlung zu Ephesus* (1873), p. 90.
- lxxv. 2. For וְקָרָאֵי read וְקָרֹב, with Dy.
- 6 *b.* Read בְּצֹר with Baethgen (Sept., *κατὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ*). The same error occurs in Hab. iii. 13. Gr., בארני, not observing Sept.'s custom of *paraphrasing צֹר*.
- 7. With Baer and De. (1874) I adopt מְרַבֵּר. So Sept., Pesh., Symm., and probably Targ. It is the reading of most MSS., and is supported by Ibn Ezra. See, however, Kimchi's important note.
- 9. Read מוֹזֵה לֹזֶה, with Sept., Pesh., Gr., Bi.
- lxxvi. 5. Read נֹרָא (as *vs.* 8, 13) with Sept., Targ., Hu., Krochmal, Gr., Bi. (finally). Cf. Ex. xv. 11. Also read עַד (Sept. *αἰώνιον*) for טָרַף, a gloss implying a false interpretation of עַד, which finally supplanted the true reading (Bi.). עַד is an unfortunate word in the MSS. (see Gen. xlix. 26, Isa. xlvi. 7).
- 7. Rapoport reads, נִרְמָנו רַכֵּב (Geiger's *Jüd. Zeitschr.*, 1871, p. 311).
- 8. For מָעֵז Geiger מָאז (xc. 11).
- 11. For תַּהַרְגֵר תַּהַרְגֵךְ, with Sept. (not Pesh.). Thrupp (pointing תַּהַרְגֵךְ) explains thus: 'Those of the wrathful who survive the judgment with which thou shalt destroy them, shall turn to thee, and shall come up to Jerusalem to the feast to adore thy name.' He finds an allusion to this passage in Zech. xiv. 6. This puts too much into the Hebrew. For my own part, I agree with Gr. and Brüll that the passage contains the name of an enemy whose submission the writer anticipated. The 'remnant' referred to is that of the smitten enemy

¹ So also is Wellhausen's correction, לְחֵיִת (cf. Hilg.'s correction in lxxviii. 11). Too easy!

- (cf. Isa. xvii. 4); but whether Aram and Hamath (see my note) are both mentioned (so Gr.), or only Aram (so Brüll), it is difficult to say. Is not the first חמת probably miswritten (like חית in lxxiv. 19)? We might plausibly read, כִּי הָמוֹן אָרָם תּוֹרֵד שׁ חַמַּת תַּחֲרַג. (This is Gr.'s suggestion, except he reads in *l.* 1, חַמַּת אָרָם.) Comp. the various readings (חרג, חנר) in xviii. 46, 2 Sam. xxii. 46. Why 'the remnant of Hamath'? Possibly Tiglath-pileser had carried away a part of the population of Hamath (cf. 2 Kings xvi. 9). 'Zechariah' too had prophesied that the cities of Aram, especially Hamath, should become Jehovah's (Zech. ix. 2, as corrected in *Var. Bible*).
- lxxvii. 7. Read ואהפֿשׁ, with Sept., Pesh., Symm., Theod. So Baethgen. mostly 3-h
- 11. Point הלותי (Bi.). חלֹותי is rendered by König 'mein Durchbohrtheitsein' (*Lehrgebäude*, p. 341); comp. De Witt, 'my misery.'
- 19. See crit. note on Isa. xvii. 13. Gr. corrects, כננל 'like the noise of wheels.'
- lxxviii. 9. With some hesitation I omit רוֹמִי as a rival reading to 'נ' (so Hu., Bi.); cf. 1 Chron. xii. 2, 2 Chron. xvii. 17. The co-ordination of the participles is not indeed without a parallel (see Jer. xlvi. 9), but at least as much can be said of the union of readings. The excision of one participle lightens the movement.
- 48 a. Dy. and (finally) Bi. correct לִדְבַר.
- 48 b. 'The (sky-sent) flames.' Ew., in his latest work (on Biblical theology), explained בני רשף in Job. v. 13 as 'sons of Reshef'—another of those mythological allusions which abound in Job. This is at least plausible. Baudissin understands רִשָּׁף or רִשָּׁף to be the storm-god, and compares the Phœnician Melqarth Reçef (art. 'Moloch,' in Herzog-Plitt, *Realencyclopädie*, x. 174). Cf. also Ed. Meyer, *Zeitschr. der D. M. G.*, xxxi. 719.
- 60. Read Qal (as lxxxv. 10; see below). The Piel of Mass. text (comp. Symm. ἰδρυθεῖσαν) implies a reluctance to localise God. Sept., Theod., κατασκήνωσεν. See Geiger, *Urschrift*, p. 321.
- 69. Read במרומים (Job xvi. 19, xxv. 2, xxxi. 2), as Hi.; or במרום, as Bi. 'ר, however, is as old as Sept., which stumbled at it.
- lxxix. 7 a. The singular verb is intolerably harsh. Read אכלו with some MSS. (see Jer. x. 25).
- lxxx. 5. Bi. corrects יהוה צבאות, very plausibly; cf. comm. on lix. 6.
- 14. The suspension of the *y* may be due to its having been inserted by a corrector (as De. suggests). The ordinary view is that this peculiarity calls attention to the middle letter in the Psalter (Strack, *Prolegomena*, p. 92; Geiger, *Urschrift*, p. 259).
- 16. Riehm and Briggs would point בִּנְה, which seems right if the word is an imperative from בָּנָה (which is at least better, on account of the preposition, than Sept.'s view that it is from בָּנָה). But בָּנָה = בָּנָה occurs nowhere else. Against König (*Lehrgebäude*, p. 331), but with Gesenius, I take it as the feminine of בָּן, which Sept. (Dan. xi. 7) translates φυτόν; cf. Syr. *kanno* 'a stock' (Pesh. Isa. xvii. 6). So

Targ. and probably Pesh. (vine-shoots). Thus the nouns in both lines become accusatives to פקר (*v.* 15 *b*); line 2 is improved by Bi.'s correction עֲלָה (collective).

I let the above note stand to account for the translation. In revising the proof, however, I have had fresh doubts as to this passage. La. and Ley omit the verse altogether as a corrupt repetition of *v.* 18. Notice the large כ, which suggests that it occupied the place of letters which had become effaced (for possible parallels to this, see Geiger, *Urschrift*, p. 295). We might of course read וְכִנְיָנָה (cf. Sept. *karáptwau*) on this ground, but the old difficulties remain.

- lxxxi. 17. Read וְאֶצְיָא, with Houb., Dathe, Bi. (an error of the ear). Cf. Sept., Pesh.
 lxxxiii. 6. Read אָהָר (1 Chron. xii. 38). So Ol., Dy., Bi.
 lxxxiv. 4. With reference to the lines attributed to the prince of the expelled Jorhomites (admired and imitated by the Arabic writers themselves—see the 13th of the *Maqāmāt* of Hariri), perhaps it should be added that the great antiquity given to them by Schultens is absurd. We might be thankful if they were even many centuries less than Solomonic.

Insert in 6 *b* יְהִלְכוּ, in 6 *c* נִיל, and in 11 *b* בְּהוֹיָן (Bi., 1882).

- lxxxv. 5. On שׁוּבְנוּ cf. König, *Lehrgebäude*, p. 491 (who renders, 'return to us'). In *l.* 2 read וְהָסֵר, with Sept., Bi.
 — 9. Read אֶלֵי שְׂרָי לָבָם לָהּ, with Sept., Baethgen. שׁוּב transitive, as in *sv.* 2, 5.
 — 10. Targ. reads לְשִׁבּוֹן (cf. on lxxviii. 60).
 — 14. Schrader (*Stud. u. Krit.*, 1868, p. 639) corrects וַיִּשְׁמַר and 'shall guard,' or 'observe (the way of his steps).' Too easy! De. (comparing Job iv. 20) gets the sense of 'observe' from the text-reading. The Hebrew is no doubt ambiguous, and in such a case a two-thirds majority of the revisers in favour of the rendering here adopted may have a special weight, especially as A.V.'s rendering is different. The meaning is, that Righteousness shall both precede and follow Jehovah. But read וַיִּשְׁעַם.
 lxxxvi. 11 *b*. Read יִחַד, with Sept., Pesh., Gr., Bi.
 lxxxvii. 7. Read חוֹלָלִים for מְחַלְלִים. Cf. לְצִיִּים, Hos. vii. 5, and see crit. note on cxxxvii. 3. Of line 2 Ol. truly observes that the expression is 'very unclear.' One of Schnurrer's readings—מְעִיגִי (cf. Sept., *ἡ κατοικία*)—has found some favour, but the word is invented.
 lxxxviii. 2 *a*. Read אֱלֹהֵי שׁוֹעֵתִי, and attach יוֹם, or, rather יוֹמָם (cf. Sept., Targ.), taken from the next line. So Gr., Bi. (cf. *v.* 14). Some will compare xxii. 2, if we may correct there מִשׁוֹעֵתִי.
 — 6. For חֲפָשִׁי, Street and Gr. גְּמִשְׁלָתִי (or the like); if so, read בְּגָמְתִים.
 — 8. Read עֲגִיתִי with Hu., Bi.
 — 16. Read אֶפְוֹנָה (lxxvii. 3), with Ol., Hu., Gr., Bi.
 — 19. Schnurrer (*Animadversiones*, 1780, p. 165), מִיִּדְעִי; rather add

- וקבר (Bi.). Baethgen follows Pesh. and Jer. (see my note in Comm.); but Sept. implies our text, though he stumbles at מוחשך.
- lxxxix. 3. Read אֲמַרְתָּ, with Sept., Jer. (most MSS.), Gr., Bi. (whose later reconstruction of this psalm I cannot now consider). Note Paseq after 'ש', indicating that a letter has dropped out. בהם was inserted later to make sense.
- 9. For חסין (a *ἀπ. λεγ.*), Gr. חסיד. But פלא in *v.* 6 suggests such an epithet as חסין (from a genuine Hebrew root). Both the Paseqs are probably to prevent the sacred name from being uttered too quickly. The second verse-half seems mutilated.
- 10. Read בשאון, with Riehm and Bi.
- 20. In *l.* 1 many MSS., 16 edd., and all the Greek versions, Targ., Pesh., Jer., and perhaps the Bab. and Jerus. Talmud, have חסיריך (cf. the var. reading in xvi. 10). Baer and De. accept it as the Massoretic reading. But in this connexion the virgules must be right. See on *v.* 51. In *l.* 2 for עֹר read עו, as Hu. proposed, or גֹּר, as virtually Venema (1762–67).
- 34. Read אסיר, with Ol., Hu., Dy., Gr., Bi.
- 48. 'אני מ' ה'. 'MSS. vary considerably, and editors have troubled themselves with explanations, but there is really no difficulty,' says Perowne. The pronoun stands first, as he rightly says, for emphasis; the sense is the same as in xxxix. 5 (see crit. note). The versions give no support to Houb.'s suggestion אדני, as *v.* 51, for אני (adopted by Ew., Hi., Ol., Dy., Gr.); and מזה-חלד, 'what life is,' seems a doubtful expression.
- 51. Read עברך, as Gr., Bi., with Pesh. and some MSS. Even if a plurality be referred to, yet it is conceived of as an individual (cf. *v.* 40). And what of 'ע כל-ד' ? Grammatically, it may no doubt be defended (see Ezek. xxxi. 6, and for the position of 'ר, Jer. xvi. 16, Prov. xxxi. 29, Neh. ix. 28); but what can it mean in the context? Surely the text is corrupt. Read בְּלִמָּת, the last two letters of which having become illegible, רַבִּים was inserted by a scribe's conjecture. So Bi., completing a conjecture of Bö. Symm., *παμπολλῶν* (Sept. simply *πολλῶν*) *ἐθνων*.
- xc. 1, xci. 9. Read מְעוּ, with Ol., Gr. (lxxi. 3). Sept. in both places *καταφυγή*; the other Greek versions (in xci. 9) *οἰκητήριον* (Field; *Auctarium*).
- 2. Read וַתְּחַוֵּל with Sept., Aq., Symm., Targ., Jer. (see his note). So Bö., Ol., Hi., De., Pe. Note the parallelism. In *v.* 6 Hu. corrects למוֹלל.
- 9 *b.* Transfer 'ה כמו to *l.* 1, and in *l.* 2 read בְּלִי (see note).
- 10. The intransitive use of נָז combined with the unusual form חיש may suggest a doubt as to the text. Turning to the versions, Targ., Symm., and Jer. are the most accurate—*τμηθέντες γὰρ ἄφνω ἐκπετανύμεθα*, *transivimus cito et evolavimus* (Targ. gives exactly our rendering). Sept., *ἐπήλθε πρᾶττης καὶ παιδευθησόμεθα*, possibly taking חיש in

- the sense of 'feeling' (cf. late Hebrew, חגיט), and conjecturing ונוסרה; similarly Pesh., but closing with 'we are snatched away.' Aq., διεπέλασεν ἀνὴρ (conjecturing), καὶ ἐπετέσθη. Quinta is reproduced by Field with some uncertainty, but his second alternative ἐξελίπομεν seems to me most probably right, considering that Sept.'s equivalent for נָכַר in xii. 2 is ἐκλείπειν, and that Syro-Hex. xc. 11 gives, for Quinta, *g'marnan*. Quinta therefore read or conjectured וְנִכְפָּה, which Gr. adopts as the correct reading. It is doubtless simpler, but does not נָ (‘to cut through,’ as an arrow parts the air) suggest the image of flight (cf. Job xx. 8)? But I have my doubts as to חגיט. The versions take it as a noun (so expressly Kimchi); most moderns as an adverbial infinitive = speedily (cf. Ass. *ikhīṣu* ‘he hastened’); but the analogy of Cant. ii. 11, and especially Isa. xix. 7, favours a perfect, either חָטַט (Deut. xxxii. 35), or better, as Bi., חָטִיט (lv. 9). Note in passing that חָטִיטָה in lxxi. 12 (K'thib) is an Aramaising false reading; seven times elsewhere we find חָטִיטָה.
- xc. 12. Bi. corrects לָלֶכֶב; Prov. ii. 10 suggests ב'.
- xc. 1, 2, 9. Krochmal supposes a rhetorical title in the manner of the later scribes, 'Prayer of Moses . . . who sitteth in the Most High's covert,' &c. This is better than to render, 'He dwelleth,' &c. (as De Witt). But it is best to prefix אֲמַרְי, in v. 2 to point אָמַר, and in v. 9 to insert אָמַרְתָּ, with Ol., Hu., Gr., Bi. As regards אָמַר, Pe. agrees, following Sept. (*ἐρεῖ*).
- xcii. 5. Read מְטִיטָה, with Hi. When the third radical is י there is a frequent uncertainty whether the singular or plural construct is meant (see Gen. xlvii. 3, Isa. lxiii. 11).
- 10. Omit the repeated words with Ley, Bi. (and many MSS. of Sept.).
- 11. Read בְּלָתִי, with Hu. (see note).
- xciii. 4. אֲדִירִים. See Pe.'s thorough crit. note. His proposal to take v. 2 as parenthetical might be supported by xlv. 6 (Mass. text), where the punctuators regard the clause 'peoples fall under thee' as a terrified exclamation which interrupts the construction. I prefer, however, to follow De.
- xcv. 7. Some words have fallen out; Bi. suggests הַאֲזִינוּ רַב־יָהּ.
- 10. Insert הַהִנֵּה or הַהִנֵּה, with Ol., Dy., Ley, Bi. So Sept.
- xcvi. 12. Read אָהָה, with Ol., Dy., Gr., Bi.
- xcvii. 11. Read אָהָה, with versions and Mich., Ol., Hu., Dy., Bi., Baethgen.
- c. 3. וְלִי (the Q'ri) is supported by Targ., Jer., Saad., by Talmud and Midrash, by some MSS., and by Ew., Hu., De., Pe., &c. וְלֵא (the K'thib), by Sept., Pesh., Symm. (*αὐτὸς ἐποίησεν ἡμᾶς οὐκ ὄντας*).
- cii. 18. עָרַעַר. Is there not an allusion here to Jer. xvii. 6, as suggested in my note? Such plays upon a double meaning are in harmony with the character of the Soferim (cf. De. on Isa. xvii. 2). It seems clear to me now that, though most commentators are against it, we must render ע in that passage 'dwarf juniper' (or, mountain-juniper), comparing, with Abulwalid, Ar. 'ar'ar', which, though some Arabic

lexicographers (see Lane's *Lex.*) represent it as Persian, is recognised by the *Qāmūs* as a good Arabic word. For observe that the unbelieving man, when driven out into the desert, cannot be compared to a destitute man; he *is* one. What more fitting object can he be compared to than a 'gloomy and stunted shrub' (Tristram) of his new and fearful habitation? Whether the name Aroer is an Arabising 'broken plural' meaning 'place of junipers' (Lagarde, *Semítica*, on Isa. xvii. 2), and whether in Jer. xviii. 6 (where Sept. reads עָרוּר עָרוּר is also a 'broken plural' or to be corrected into עָרָר 'dwarf juniper,' may both be left open questions. In our psalm-passage 'destitute' seems both a literal and a forcible equivalent. Aq. and Symm. excellently, τοῦ ἐκκεκνωμένου; the other versions vaguely, 'lowly' (Sept.), 'wretched' (Pesh.), 'desolated' (Targ.).

- civ. 4. Read אֵשׁ וְלֶהֱט אֵשׁ (Ol. doubtfully, and Bi.). אֵשׁ is fem.; for in Job xx. 26 we should point נִפְחָה, and in Jer. xviii. 46 read יִצְאָה (as Num. xxi. 28).
- cv. 18. Targ., Hi., De. render 'iron (i.e. iron-fetters) entered into his soul.' It is true בְּרִגְלָה elsewhere is masculine, but a similar incorrectness is found in Mass. text of civ. 4. But why assume this? Read בְּבִרְגָל (Ol., Bi.). On the other view, lucidity seems to require עֲדֵי-נִפְשׁוֹ (lxix. 2).
- 27, 28. Read שָׁם, with Sept., Pesh., Aq., Symm., Jer., Hu., De., and omit לָא with Sept., Pesh., and Sexta in Field (so Bi.).
- 40. Read שָׂאוּ, with Sept., Ol., Dy., Bi.
- cvi. 20, 27. See notes; the second correction is presupposed by Sept., Pesh., Targ. (so too Venema, Hu., Hi., De., Bi.).
- cvii. 3. Read מִיָּמִין, with Clericus, Mich., Ol. (doubtfully), Hu., Pe., Bi. See crit. note on Isa. xlix. 12.
- 17. Read הוֹלִים, with Ol. (altern.), Gr., Bi.
- 30. קָחוּז. On the formation cf. Nöldeke, *Kurzgef. syrische Gramm.*, § 126 G; the root is חוּז 'to shut in,' whence the two possible meanings 'city,' 'haven' (see note, p. 297). Ass. *makhazu* is used of the fortified towns of Hazael, and Nebuchadnezzar calls Babylon the *makhag* of the great lord Marduk (Norris; Schrader). 'Haven' is therefore a *later* meaning. The Arabising sense of 'shore,' suggested by Schnurrer (*Animadverss.* p. 496), is unnecessary.
- 33. מ' and מ' at once suggest Babylonia. For the rendering 'watercourses' see Whitehouse's note in *Expositor*, Dec. 1886, p. 479. There seem to be two traditional renderings: hence it is that the Vulg. oscillates between 'fontes' and 'rivi aquarum,' and Sept. renders here διέξοδοι and in Isa. lviii. 11 ἰηγή. The Assyrio-Babylonian equivalent of מוֹצְאֵי מַיִם is *mūḫū mī*, which means *Abzugs-canäle* 'drainage-gutters' (Schrader, *K.A.T.*, p. 124).
- cix. 2. Read רִשְׁעָה (Houb., Hi., Dy., Gr.).
- 5. Read וַיִּשְׁלַח (xxxv. 12, xxxviii. 21), or וַיִּשְׁבֵּן (Prov. xvii. 13), Hu.
- 10. Read נִרְשָׁן (Sept., Houb., Hu., Bi.). See Sept. Ex. xii. 39.

cix. 11. Gr. **יִבְקֹשׁ**. Cf. crit. note on ix. 17.

cx. 3 *a*. For **בְּהַרְרִי** (we should expect **בְּהַדְרָת**) read **בְּהַרְרִי**, with Symm., Jer., many editions and MSS. (so Hare, Houb., Ol., Hu., Gr., Bi.).

— 3 *b*. Sept., **πρὸ ἐωσφόρου**; Pesh., *men q'dim* (from the beginning); Theod., **ἀπὸ πρωῒ**; Quinta, **ἀπὸ ὄρθρου** = **כִּישָׁחַר**. Cf. Sept. Job iii. 9, xxxviii. 12, xli. 9. Sept. also reads **יִלְדָּתֶיךָ** (cf. ii. 7), which Herder admits, rendering—

Vom Schooss der Morgenröthe, wie den Thau,
Hab' ich dich mir erzeugt.

cxiii. 8. Read **לְהִאֲשִׁיבוּ** (cf. Böttcher, *Lehrbuch*, i. 662, Anm. 2). On the affixed **י**, so abundant in the later psalms (from ci. 5 onwards), but especially in Ps. cxiii., see Philippi, *Wesen und Ursprung des Status Constructus* (1871), p. 96, &c. To admit it in the present case, however, is contrary to all precedent.

cxiv. 1. Krochmal and Gr. **נוֹעַז** (Isa. xxxiii. 19); but see my note.

cxvi. 1. Read **הִתְמַנְתִּי** (Bruston, Gr.). Cf. *v*. 10.

— 9. Weir proposes **בְּאֲרָחוֹת** (*Academy*, July 1, 1873, p. 251).

cxviii. 12. Read, with Baethgen, **כַּאֲשֶׁר בְּקוֹצִים** (who renders *l. 2*, **בְּלִקְיִן הַיָּד**, **בְּלִקְיִן הַיָּד**). How much more natural than the text-reading! For what is the sense of the energetic exclamation in *l. 3*, if the 'extinguishment' (**רָעַבְנִי**) is, even from a prophetic or ideal point of view, past? Besides, should not *vv.* 10–12 present us with a climax in the description of the assailants' fury? Lastly, **רַעַךְ** occurs nowhere else in Pual; one expects Qal (Isa. xliii. 17). Baethgen's argument seems very strong.

— 27 *a*. La. proposes **בְּעַרְבִים**. Cf. Lev. xxiii. 40 (see my note).

cxix. 20. **נִרְכַּח**. Most render, 'is crushed' (viz. with longing), and rightly no doubt. The versions give the same sense but without the figure. The Hifil occurs in Lam. iii. 16, and a noun **נִרְכַּח** = that which is bruised, in Lev. ii. 14, 16. But Aram. **נָרַם** has a secondary meaning, 'to read, study.' See (Targum) Prov. iv. 19, **תִּרְכַּח מוֹתָא תִּרְכַּח תִּרְכַּח** (according to one reading); and comp. Deut. ii. 19 (Targ. Jon.). These passages clearly show that **נָרַם** was a natural word to employ for the study of the Law. Does not the psalmist play upon this double meaning? For the verse may, from the point of view of Aramaic, be rendered, 'My soul is absorbed in longing study concerning thine ordinances at all times.' Cf. *v*. 97.

— 21. Omit **אֲרוּרִים** (a gloss), with Bi.

— 22. Read **זָל** (Ew., Hi., Bö., von Ortenberg, Riehm, Gr.). The false punctuation was caused by **זָל** in *v*. 18.

— 96. **תְּכַלֵּה**. Sept. *συντελείας*, Aq. *τελέσει*. A *ἄπ.* *λεγ.* for **תְּכַלִּית**, which means both the attainment of the goal and the goal or boundary itself (see De. on Job xi. 7). We need not alter the text, with Gr. (on the ground of the obscure rendering of Symm.). The form in

הַ— was preferred to that in ית— for euphony's sake (see termination of next word).

- cxix. 103. Read אֲמַרְתִּיךָ (Hi., De.). Sept. τὰ λόγιά σου.
 — 119. Read חֲשַׁבְתָּ (Sept., Ew., Gr., Bi.).
 — 128. Read בְּקוֹרְתִיךָ (Sept., Pesh., Jer., Houb., and most except Hi.)
 It seems practically the same whether we read יִשְׁרְתִי or אִשְׁרְתִי ;
 Sept. gives the right sense for either, πρὸς πάσας τὰς ἐντολάς σου
 καταρθούμην.
 — 149. Sept., Targ., Jer. have כִּי־שָׁפְטֶךָ ; cf. בְּמִשְׁפָּטֶךָ, v. 132.
 cxix. 1. Read שְׁבוֹת or שְׁבִית (as v. 4), with Ol., Bō., Hu., Gr., Bi. See
 crit. note on xiv. 7.
 cxix. 6. שֶׁלֶף. The punctuation seems to me to imply the sense 'to
 blossom' ('to become unsheathed'). So Jerome, '(statim ut) vir-
 uerit ;' Targ., יִצִּי (the duplicate rendering, which gives the rival
 view, looks like a paraphrase added later); Aq., ἀνέθαιεν; Symm.,
 ἐκκαυλῆσαι ('to run to stalk'); Sexta, ἐκστειρεῶσαι ('to arrive at full
 firmness'). Of Sept. Theodoret remarks, Ἐνια τῶν ἀντιγράφων οὐκ
 ἐξανθῆσαι ἔχει, ἀλλὰ ἐκσπασθῆναι (we should now say just the oppo-
 site). Theod. and Quinta certainly render ἐκσπασθῆναι, and no doubt
 this expresses the usual meaning of the verb (so Rashi). Yet if
 the punctuators had adopted this view, would they not probably,
 for clearness, have pointed as Pual? The intrans. sense 'to blossom'
 is justified by the Talmudic שלופפין 'date-flowers' (see Buxtorf).
 Bi. prefers to point שֶׁלֶף. Calv., A.V., Ew., Hi., De., and Geiger
 (*Zeitschr. der D. M. G.*, xiv. 278-9) follow Targ.; Hu. and Pe. agree
 with Theod.
 cxix. See Haupt's very bold restoration of the text of this psalm in
Hebraica, Jan. 1886, pp. 98-106. None of his own conjectures can
 I accept, least of all, in v. 4, תִּירָא '(the) religion' (cf. יִרְאָה, xix. 10
 Job iv. 6), though it is true that Jerome (*Opera*, ed. Migne, i. 865-6,
Epist. cvi.) recognises the reading 'Thira,' and that Aq., Symm.,
 Theod., render (ἐνεκεν) φόβου, νόμου, τοῦ νόμου σου (comp. also the
 other Greek versions in Field). But how can one admit the 'rare
 word' coined by Haupt? And what objection is there to תִּירָא?
 Simply this: that it makes the poet suggest more than he explicitly
 says? But why should he not? Must not all hymn-writers do this?
 Gr. would correct תִּירָע; cf. Sexta in Field, τοῦ γνωσθῆναι τὸν λόγον
 σου. A poorer word for this context!
 — 6. Insert הוֹחִילָהּ, with Hu. It might easily fall out (see end of v. 5).
 cxix. 3. Read וְהוֹלִלֵינוּ 'and our dancers,' with Halévy (on this whole
 psalm cf. his *Mélanges*, 1883, pp. 14, 15). Note that in xxx. 12
 מְחוֹל and שִׁמְחָה are parallel, and that in lxxxvii. 7 'singers' and
 'dancers are brought into connexion. It is no doubt somewhat
 more natural to take the participles in lines 1 and 3 as synonymous;
 but are there not parallels enough for the view here adopted of the
 second participle? The alternative is to read וְשׁוֹלֵלֵינוּ, with Hu.

(altern.), Pe., Gr., Bi. But observe that ש and ת are not nearly so often confounded as ה and ת. Either conjecture, however, involves less 'subjectivity' than to derive the ἀπ. λεγ. לַלְלָהּ from לָלַל, 'to howl.' Sept., οἱ ἀπαγαγόντες ἡμᾶς; Targ., בְּיָזְנָא, perhaps guessing. The former paraphrases שְׂמָחָה שִׁמְנוֹן.

- cxxxvii. 5. The text-reading תִּשְׁכַּח is troublesome, as the versions show. On Targ., see my note. Sept., 'let it be forgotten;' Pesh. and Saad., 'let it forget (me).' Jer., 'in oblivione sit.' Ibn Ezra and Kimchi, 'let it forget (its art).'¹ The former also mentions a view adopted by Schlesinger in Cahen's French-Jewish Bible—'qu'elle se dessèche, qu'elle s'engourdisse' (תִּשְׁכַּח in the sense of תִּכְהַשׁ). But transposition (cf. on xxii. 16) is the only adequate remedy, as Krochmal, Herzfeld, and Grätz have seen. Read either תִּכְהַשׁ ' (let it) fall away;' or, better, תִּכְהַשׁ ' (let it) disappoint.' Weir's יִבֵּשׁ פֶּה is a poorer phrase.
- 8. Bö., Hi., Ew., Riehm, הַשְׁדֹּדֶה 'thou desolater.' I have explained why I agree rather with Aq. and Theod. (ἡ προνενομευμένη, ἡ διαρπασθησομένη) than with Symm. (ἡ ληστρίς), Targ. (בְּזוּזִיתָא), and Pesh. (bozuzto). Halévy renders, 'fille moribonde.'
- cxxxviii. 2. For אִמְרַתְךָ read אִמְרָתְךָ (Gr.). If we keep the text, we might render either, 'thou hast magnified Thy promise above every monument of Thyself' (see crit. note on Isa. lv. 13), or (notice the punctuation לָל in Baer and De.), '. . . Thy name (and) Thy promise above everything,' where, of course, 'Thy promise' might be an intrusive gloss on 'Thy name.' Dy. reads, שְׂמִיךְ.
- cxxxix. On the strong Aramaising element in this psalm cf. Giesebrecht in Stade's *Zeitschrift*, 1881, pp. 286-7. Elsewhere this writer may have fallen into exaggeration and have limited the old Hebrew vocabulary too much.
- 11. Read יְסוּבֵנִי (Ew.). Others prefer יְעוּבֵנִי (Bö., De.). Even if שׁוּבָה can borrow the sense of שָׂאָה, yet 'inhiat me' is not the phrase one expects here.
- 16. De. adopts the Q'ri וְלִי. But this reading seems discredited by the Haggadic interpretations of it (see Rashi *ad loc.*, and cf. Joel Müller, *Masechet-Soferim* (1878), p. 95.
- 19. Read יְסוּרֵי (Targ., Ol., Gr., Bi.).
- 20. Read יְמִרְוֶה (Hu., Riehm, Pe., Dy.), and at the end שְׂמִיךְ (Bö., Ol., Bruston, Gr., Bi.).
- cxl. 3. It is safest to read יְנִירֵי (Hu.); but cf. crit. note on Isa. liv. 15.
- 9-11. Many, from Hare and Venema onwards, have seen that יְרוֹמוֹ cannot belong to v. 9, but to prefix this word to v. 10 is not enough. We must read אֶל יְרוֹמוֹ; Sept. and Symm. witness at least to the negative particle. This is safer than Thrupp's מִסִּבָּם מִרְאוֹ, 'men shall shoot at them the poison of their own tables,' a truly

¹ So Clément Marot in the fine Huguenot Psalter already referred to—

Or, toutesfois, puisse oublier ma dextre—
L'art de harper.

wonderful correction to which Gr. approximates unawares (cf. Jerome's 'amaritudo convivarum meorum ;' Sept.'s τοῦ κυκλώματος αὐτῶν). Perhaps one may remark here that Thrupp had a clearer sense than some of his successors of the difficulty of interpreting the Psalms, and the desirableness of a fresher and less traditional exegesis, and also of the helpfulness of the ancient versions for the correction of the text. His own work, however (2 vols., 1860), though not illiberal in the tone of its exegesis, shows a great want of scholarly tact, especially in the corrections of the text. In *v.* 11 read יִמְטֵר (Hu.); the insertions are due to Bi. In *l.* 4 Gr. corrects very happily, במכמרות (cf. cxli. 10, Hab. i. 15, 16, Isa. xix. 8, li. 20). The text-reading is a ἀπ. λεγ. explained from Ar. *hamrat* 'rain' as = 'whirl-pools.' Mohammed says, 'When the unjust are in the floods of death' (*Korán*, vi. 93). But, especially in so corrupt a context, I hesitate to accept this Arabising word.

cxlii. 8c. Read יתפארו (Gr.).

cxliii. 7. The arrangement of the lines is perhaps imperfect. In *l.* 4 the insertion (from xxviii. 1) saves us from the necessity of rendering 'else' or 'that I be not.'

— 9. Read קִיִּיתִי with Ibn Janah (Abulwalid), Ol, Ew., Hu., Bi. The construction with אֵל is no doubt unusual, and may indicate a later period. Note that בָּטַח is constructed both with בָּ and also (less frequently) with אֵל. Sept. has, ὅτι πρὸς σε κατέφυγον (i.e. either 'ח or 'נִסְתִּיתִי). Have we any right to take בָּקִיִּיתִי in a reflexive sense? as Perowne pertinently asks. Gr. reads, קִיִּיתִי.

— 10. Read בָּאָרְחָה with Pesh., Hu., Weir, Gr., Bi.

cxliv. 2. Read הַקְּדִי (Krochmal, Gr.). De. defends הַקְּדִי by referring to Jon. ii. 9, where, however, הַקְּדִים means—not 'the author of their mercies,' but either the divine benefit which has been theirs in the past (as Kalisch), or better, that which may be theirs in the future (cf. מִצְוֵי מִן הַטְּאֵת 'from guilt that might be mine,' xviii. 24; מִחַטָּאתִי 'from sin that might be mine,' Prov. xx. 9). In the same line מִפְּלִטִי-לִי may possibly combine two readings, מִפְּלִטִי and לִי מִפְּלִטִי. See xviii. 3, and cf. foot-note on lv. 9, above. Or the י- may be the 'binding sound' (see cxiii. 5, 6).

— 3. This passage may be added to those usually quoted (Cant. viii. 4, Job xvi. 6) to show the incipient negative meaning of קָה. The psalmist says, literally, 'What is man, and (yet) thou dost notice him,' as Driver rightly renders (*Hebrew Tenses*, § 79).

cxlv. 5. For וְדַבְּרִי, read וְדַבְּרִי (Bi.).

cxlvii. 1. Read וְזָמְרוּ (cf. cxlvii. 7), continuing 'לָא' (Bi.). Cf. Sept.

— 20. וּמִשְׁבָּטָיו (Sept., Ol, Bi.).

cxlviii. 2. The K'th is right (as in cxlvii. 9). The Q'ri gives an anomalous phrase invented to get over the incongruity of a singular noun and plural verb (Schrader, *Jahrbücher f. prot. Theologie*, 1876, p. 316). See note.

cxlviii. 6. Read יַעֲבֹרוּ (Bi.).

cl. 4. בְּמִנִּים. Pesh., *ḅq̄thôrê* 'cum citharis.' See crit. note on xlv. 9. 'מ' is of course the plural of מִן, properly 'a part,' and hence (cf. Syr. *menno*, 1 'a hair,' 2 'a harp-string')—a word which was once in use in Hebrew, as the prep. מִן attests, and which Hu. and Pe. find in מַנְהוּ (lxviii. 24).

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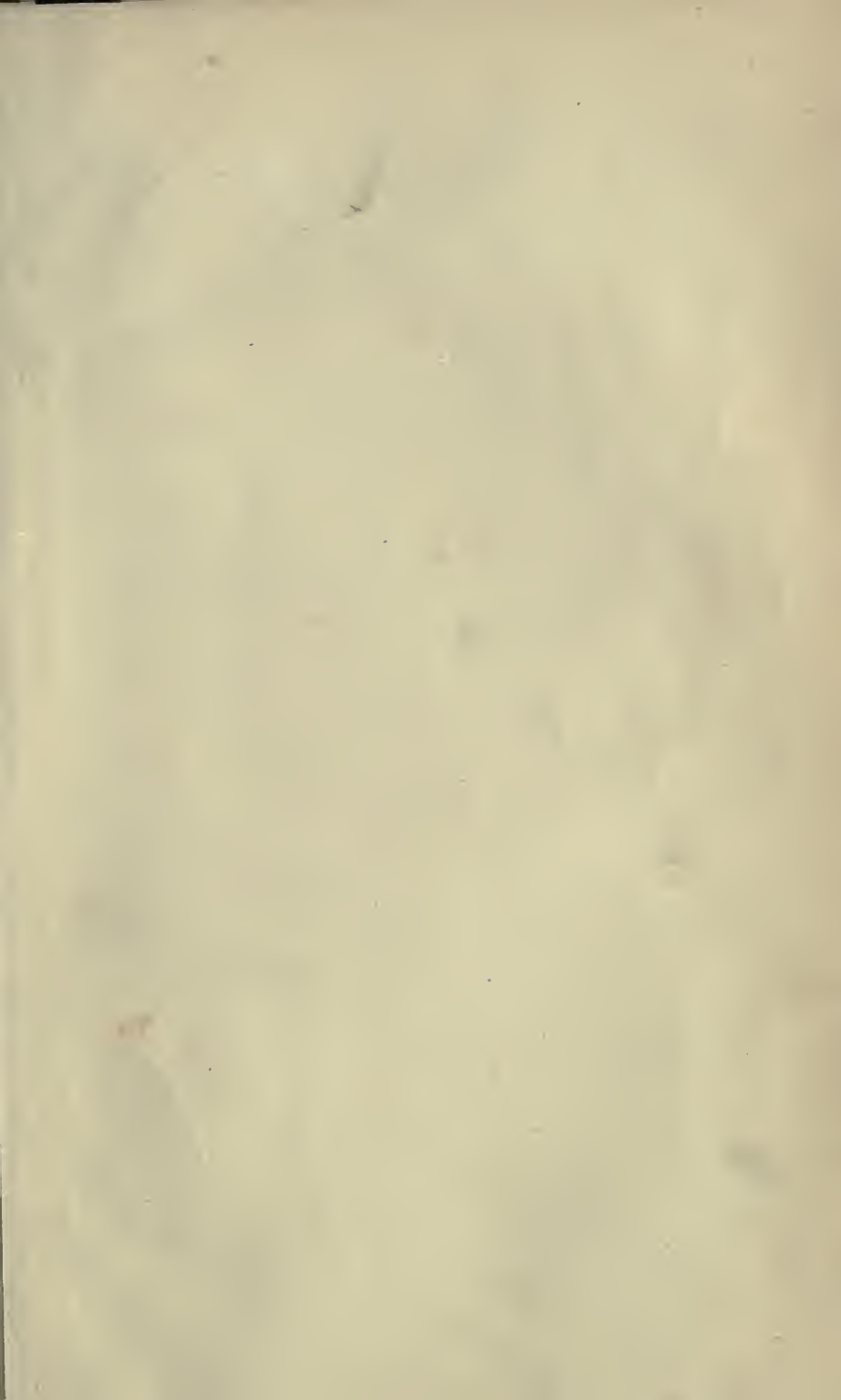
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